Julie & Julia

by

Nora Ephron

Based on Julie and Julia by Julie Powell
and My Life In France by Julia Child with Alex Prud'Homme

FINAL SHOOTING DRAFT
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Based on two true stories.

EXT. LE HAVRE - 1948 - PAY

A sky-blue 1947 Buick station wagon dangles in the air on a crane. It starts its descent. An American in France.

EXT. BUICK - 1948 - DAY

A diplomatic license plate is affixed to the car. packed in the back. The car pulls away. Bags are packed in the back. The car pulls away.

PAUL CHILD (V.O.)
Repeat after me. Nous cherchons un bon restaurant francais.

His French is excellent.

JULIA CHILD (V.O.)
Nous cherchons un bon restaurant francais.

Her French is atrocious.

EXT. NORMANDY - 1948 - DAY

The Buick drives through the French countryside.

PAUL CHILD (V.O.)
Quelque chose typique et charmante.

JULIA CHILD (V.O.)
Quelque chose typique et charmante.

EXT. ROUEN - 1948 - DAY

The Buick drives into Rouen.

JULIA and PAUL CHILD get out of the car in front of La Couronne, a restaurant. Julia is a tall American woman wearing a hat. Paul, shorter, debonair, is carrying the red Guide Michelin.

PAUL CHILD
Bon appetit.

JULIA CHILD
Bon appetit.

INT. LA COURONNE - 1948 - DAY

Julia and Paul at a table as the waiter brings Julia a Dover Sole meuniere. She inhales the aroma.

JULIA
Butter.

She tastes it. On Julia, transported.

JULIA
Wow. Oh gosh. Paul. Taste this.

EXT. PARIS - 1948 - DAY

The Buick whips through the streets of Paris. Paris is beautiful. Julia is driving, Paul is in the passenger seat.

A small group of pedestrians is about to cross the street as the Buick barrels down the block.

The pedestrians jump back onto the curb.

EXT. JULIA'S APARTMENT - 81 RUE DE L'UNIVERSITE - 1948 - DAY

The Buick pulls to a stop. Julia and Paul get out of the car. Julia looks up at a charming, old four-story building. On the top floor are windows with Juliet balconies.

JULIA
I can't believe we get to live here.

Paul begins to unload the car.

The door to the automobile entrance to the building is opened by the CONCIERGE.

JULIA
(to concierge)
Bon jour, madame. Je suis Child. Enchante.

INT. A COPY OF MASTERING THE ART OF FRENCH COOKING - 2002 - DAY

By Julia Child, Simone Beck and Louisette Bertholle. The 1961 edition. The famous fleur de lis cover.

CONTINUED:

It's on a bookshelf of cookbooks, along with "The Joy of Cooking" by Irma Rombauer, as well as books by Martha Stewart, Nigella Lawson, Marcella Hazan. A HAND reaches for it, take it off the bookshelf.

FAST CUTS:

THE BOOK IS PACKED INTO A BOX FULL OF COOKBOOKS, AND "THE JOY OF COOKING" IS PLACED ON TOP OF IT...

THE BOX OF COOKBOOKS IS TAPED SHUT.... A HAND WRITES "COOKBOOKS - KITCHEN" ON THE TOP OF THE BOX...

THE BOX IS LOADED INTO THE BACK OF A VAN.

EXT. BROOKLYN-QUEENS EXPRESSWAY - 2002 - DAY

The van, a purple Bronco, drives from Brooklyn to Queens.

INT. VAN - CONTINUOUS

JULIE POWELL, 29, pretty, in the passenger seat. The cat carrier is on her lap. Her husband ERIC POWELL, 30, handsome in an off-beat way, drives.

JULIE
Is this a mistake? Should we have stayed in Brooklyn?

ERIC
We are going to love Queens. Queens is beautiful.

EXT. JACKSON AVENUE - LONG ISLAND CITY - 2002 - DAY

A bleak area in Queens near the Triborough Bridge. Eric Powell takes a large box out of the back of the purple Bronco. He carries it into a run-down, two-story building and up the stairs. There's a pizzeria on the ground floor.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - DAY

Julie carries the cats upstairs to a decrepit loft. She looks around the apartment.

INT. POWELL KITCHEN - LONG ISLAND CITY - 2002 - DUSK

Julie Powell in her cramped, square kitchen. Julie and Eric's cats watch as she unpacks.

Eric comes in with another box of kitchen things as Julie opens the silverware drawer. It careens off its tracks and falls onto the floor, scattering the cats. Julie bursts into tears. Eric hugs her as she sobs.

JULIE
What are we doing here?

ERIC
Repeat after me. Nine hundred square feet.

JULIE
Nine hundred square feet. Plus it's close to your office.

ERIC
Plus it's close to my office. But ... we don't have to move -- we can renege on the lease, repack everything, and live in the van.

JULIE
You're right, you're right.

Julie wipes her eyes. Eric leaves the kitchen.

A truck rumbles past outside. It's deafening.

JULIE
Eric? What is that noise?

The apartment almost seems to be shaking.

ERIC
What noise?

JULIE
Is it going to be like this every night?

ERIC
Maybe.

INT. CHILD APARTMENT - DAY

Paul carries a suitcase upstairs to a duplex full of old, elegant furniture. Julia stands in the sun-drenched apartment. She walks into the bedroom and sits on the bed.

Then she lies down on it. It's too short -- her feet stick out over the edge.

EXT. LONG ISLAND CITY - 2002 - DAY

Julie Powell comes out the door onto the street. A summer morning. Debris blows on the street, waves of heat rise from the sidewalk.

EXT. QUEENS - 2002 - DAY

Julie walks past the Pepsi sign.

EXT. SUBWAY STATION - 2002 - DAY

Julie climbs the stairs to the elevated train. It's crowded and hot.

INT. SUBWAY - 2002 - DAY

Julie rides the F train to work. The passengers are wilted and miserable.

EXT. CORTLAND STREET STATION - 2002 - DAY

Julie comes out of the subway at Ground Zero. It's almost a year after September 11. Yellow trucks, excavators, firemen, trucks taking debris away. Julie crosses the street to the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) Building.

JULIE (V.O.)
Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, Julie Powell.

INT. JULIE'S CUBICLE - LMDC - 2002 - DAY

Julie's cubicle, among other cubicles, at the LMDC, the agency in charge of the rebuilding effort at the World Trade Center site. Julie, wearing a headset, on the phone.

CONTINUED:

WOMAN'S VOICE ON PHONE
My son died in the second tower --

JULIE
I'm sorry --

The woman on the phone starts to cry. Julie is devastated. She closes her eyes as the woman sobs.

JULIE
I am so sorry --

INT. JULIE'S CUBICLE - LMDC - SAME DAY

Julie on the phone.

MAN'S VOICE ON PHONE
Are you the person to speak to if I don't like the plan for the memorial that was in this morning's Times?

JULIE
You can speak to me.

MAN'S VOICE ON PHONE
Do you have any power?

JULIE
No --

MAN'S VOICE ON PHONE
I want to speak to someone in power. I don't like this plan.

JULIE
I don't like the plan either.

INT. SAME SCENE - LATER

WOMAN'S VOICE ON PHONE
You people are a bunch of heartless bureaucratic goons --

JULIE
I am not a heartless bureaucratic goon. I'm just a person in a cubicle and I am doing the best I can.

CONTINUED:

WOMAN'S VOICE ON PHONE
This is my sixth phone call, and all anyone tells me is I have to come down there and fill out a form.

JULIE
You do. But if you don't want to, I will fill it out for you. But you still have to come here to sign it.

WOMAN'S VOICE ON PHONE
To your cubicle?

JULIE
Yes.

INT. SAME SCENE - LATER

JULIE
I feel terrible about what you're going through, Mr. Simon.

MR. SIMON ON PHONE
You have no idea what I'm going through, Miss Powell. This whole thing is completely inefficient, My three-year-old is more capable of helping --

JULIE
Please stop yelling at me. I am your friend.

INT. SAME SCENE - LMPC - 2002 - LATER

Julie on the phone, crying.

WOMAN'S VOICE ON PHONE
My husband was an emergency worker after 9/11 and now the doctor says there's fiberglass in his lungs ...

INT. MR. MISHER'S OFFICE - LMDC - 2002 - LATER

Julie is reading her notes from the previous phone call to her boss, MR. MISHER, a bureaucrat in his early forties.

CONTINUED:

JULIE
His wife says there's so much crap in his lungs he can't breathe, and now his insurance is refusing to pay for this drug that might really work --

MR. MISHER
Tell her to call the Health Department.

JULIE
That's an answering machine.

MR. MISHER
Andrea Gomez in the Mayor's office -

JULIE
Thank you. Thank you.

EXT. NEW YORK STREET - DUSK

A crowd of tired, work-weary New Yorkers walking in a pack toward the subway. Julie is among them. They pass a food store. All of them keep walking except Julie, who stops, transfixed, by a window display of Scharffenberger chocolate.

JULIE
Chocolate cream pie.

Like a hunting dog sniffing prey, she walks into the store.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - 2002 - NIGHT

Julie is making a chocolate cream pie. Eric is mixing gimlets in the living room.

JULIE
You know what I love about cooking? I love that after a day where nothing is sure, and when I say nothing I mean nothing, you can come home and absolutely know that if you add egg yolks to chocolate and sugar and milk, it will get thick. It's such a comfort.

Eric brings her the gimlet.

ERIC
Bad day?

CONTINUED:

Julie nods.

Eric tastes the chocolate custard. Delicious. She pours it into a graham cracker crust.

ERIC
When will this pie be ready?

JULIE
Around midnight.

ERIC
I'll be here.

JULIE
Ritual Cobb Salad lunch tomorrow. Dreading dreading.

EXT. BRYANT PARK RESTAURANT - DAY

Julie is late arriving, and finds her way to a table with three girlfriends, CASSIE, REGINA and ANNABELLE. Cassie in on the phone with her assistant Tracy. Everyone kisses or air-kisses when JULIE arrives.

JULIE
(by way of explanation)
Subway.

The WAITER materializes at the table.

REGINA
Cobb salad, no blue cheese. He leaves.

CASSIE
(interrupting the phone call)
Cobb salad, no beets.

ANNABELLE
Cobb salad, no bacon.

JULIE
Cobb salad, no eggs.

CASSIE
(on phone with her assistant)
Tell them, are you listening carefully, Tracy?
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

CASSIE (cont'd)
Tell them to take the offer up to one eighty- five, repeat after me, Tracy, one eight-five .... And call me the second you hear back.
(hangs up)
My assistant. It's almost not worth having one.

REGINA
I know. Yesterday I said to Allison, go to the pharmacy and get me black panti-hose and she came back and said, they didn't have any, so I said, DID YOU TRY ANOTHER PHARMACY? I mean, honestly.

CASSIE
Or Bloomingdale's, what's wrong with trying Bloomingdale's?

REGINA
Yes!

CASSIE
If only I could be my own assistant.

JULIE
You can be. Fire your assistant and don't hire a replacement.

CASSIE
That's not what I mean, Julie.

Cassie's phone rings.

CASSIE
Hello Tracy.... Okay, tell them One nine oh....

She hangs up. She's pleased with herself.

ANNABELLE
One nine oh what? What are you up to?

CASSIE
One hundred ninety million dollars. We're assembling a parcel midtown.

ANNABELLE
Wow. That's great, Cassie.

CONTINUED: (2)

JULIE
A parcel of what?

CASSIE
(as if to an idiot)
Buildings. We're going to tear them all down and put up a high-rise.

Regina raises her glass.

REGINA
To your parcel. And enough about you. Here's to me. As of yesterday I am the senior vice president in charge of corporate publicity, which means I get a raise and I can borrow half a million dollars at two per cent. If I want to.

ANNABELLE
If you want to?

CASSIE
How's your job, Julie?

Julie is about to answer, but before she says anything, Cassie interrupts.

CASSIE
I can only imagine. Heartbreaking. Painful.

REGINA
So sad. But not in a bad way.

CASSIE
Oh God. I totally forgot.

Cassie pulls out her cell phone and ma assistant about a dinner reservation at Le Bernardin.

Regina's phone rings. She answers.

Now Cassie and Regina are both on the phone.

ANNABELLE
Julie, I've got to interview you for this piece I'm writing.

JULIE
Sure, Annabelle. Great. I'm honored.

CONTINUED: (3)

Annabelle takes out a small tape recorder and turns it on.

ANNABELLE
Call Julie about interview.

Julie is the only person at the table who's not on an electronic device. She starts to eat a breadstick.

Cassie takes the breadstick out of her hand. Annabelle puts the tape recorder back into her purse.

JULIE
What's it about? The article?

ANNABELLE
It's about ... our generation. Turning thirty. People turning thirty.
(takes out a Palm organizer, looks at it)
My life. I am so busy. I don't know when I can fit you in.

JULIE
May I remind you, I don't want to see you, you want to see me.

ANNABELLE
Would a breakfast work?

CUT TO:

COVER OF NEW YORK MAGAZINE: "IS THIRTY THE NEW TWENTY? Portrait of a lost generation" by Annabelle Smith.

Pull back to reveal a newsstand near:

INT/EXT. BOOKSTORE - DUSK

Julie browsing for books with her friend Sarah.

JULIE
(imitating Annabelle)
"It's about our generation turning thirty."

SARAH
What did you expect? Annabelle was always a liar.

CONTINUED:

JULIE
"Julie Powell, once the editor of the Amherst literary magazine, the one we all knew would be --
(makes quote marks)
-- "the one" -- tempted for eight years before giving up on her novel and is now working in a cubicle as a mid-level bureaucrat attempting to deal with the after-effects of 9/11."

SARAH
You memorized it. How pathetic.

JULIE
She left so much out.

SARAH
Anyway, the picture was good.

JULIE
I looked fat.

SARAH
Just your face.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julie toasts bread, chops up tomatoes, garlic, etc. Eric reads a manuscript.

JULIE
I forgot to tell you. Do you know what Annabelle's doing now? Sarah told me. A blog.

ERIC
Of what?

JULIE
What do you mean of what? A blog of Annabelle. Of every thought that passes through her brain, her stupid, vapid, insipid --
(beat)
I could write a blog. I have thoughts.

ERIC
And you're a writer, which is more than I can say for Annabelle.

CONTINUED:

JULIE
If only that were true.

ERIC
You wrote a novel --

JULIE
(slightly irritated)
Half a novel. And no one wanted to publish it.
(calming down)
You're not a writer unless someone publishes you.

ERIC
That's what's so great about blogs. You don't have to be published. You can just go On Line and press Enter and there it is, out there.

Julie chops slightly more furiously. Then:

JULIE
What would I write a blog about? You're an editor -- tell me.

INT. POWELL LIVING ROOM - 2002 - NIGHT

Eric and Julie eat bruschetta at a table in the loft living room.

ERIC
How much you love Queens.

JULIE
A short blog.

ERIC
You could write about your job.

JULIE
If I wrote a blog about my job and anyone at work ever read it --
(she makes a slashing motion across her neck)
I mean hello.

ERIC
(re: bruschetta)
This is good. This is really really good.

CONTINUED:

JULIE
On top of which, the whole idea of writing a blog would be to get away from what I do all day. The way the cooking is a way to get away from what I do all day --

ERIC
So write a blog about cooking.

JULIE
But I'm not a real cook. I'm not Julia Child or Mario Batali.

ERIC
Julia Child wasn't always Julia Child.

A beat.

JULIE
If I really wanted to learn to cook, I could just cook my way through Julia Child's cookbook. I could blog about that. I have a copy. I stole it from my mother the last time we were in Texas.

Hold on them, thinking about it. It's a good idea.

JULIE
When I was eight, my father's boss came to dinner, it was a really big deal, so my mother made boeuf bourguignon. I mean, it wasn't "boeuf bourguignon," it was "Julia's boeuf bourguignon." It was like Julia was there, in the room, on our side, like a great big good fairy, and everything was going to be all right.

INT. POWELL'S LIVING ROOM - 2002 - NIGHT

Julie and Eric watch Julia Child on the DVD A&E Biography of Julia Child.

JULIE
She changed everything. Before her, it was frozen food and can openers and marshmallows.

CONTINUED:

ERIC
Don't knock marshmallows.

On Julie, staring at Julia on television.

JULIE
She's so adorable.

She's tall, she's awkward, she's gawky, she's goofy. She's wearing an apron and a string of pearls.

JULIE
(mesmerized)
Pearls. The woman is wearing pearls in the kitchen.

Julia Child flips a potato pancake and half of it lands on the stove. She's unfazed. She flips it back into the pan.

Julie is entranced.

JULIA
(on television)
Bon Appetit.

ERIC
(imitating Julia)
"Bon Appetit."

JULIE
(imitating Julia)
"Bon Appetit."

ERIC
"Bon Appetit."

JULIE
"Bon Appetit."

Both of them start to laugh.

They kiss. It turns into something.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - 2002 - NIGHT

After sex. Julie and Eric in bed. Julie is reading Mastering the Art of French Cooking by Child, Beck and Bertholle.

JULIE
(quoting from the book)
"For the servantless American cook." That's me all right.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

JULIE (cont'd)
Okay, here's a problem -- I've never eaten an egg.

ERIC
And I have a hyper-acidic stomach. We'll deal. So you'd cook your way through the Julia Child Cookbook and write a blog about it.

JULIE
But I'd probably need a deadline.

ERIC
Why?

JULIE
Because otherwise it would be like everything else I do. I mean, let's face it, I never finish anything --

She blinks back a tear. Wipes her eyes. She's not going to cry.

ERIC
Hey --

JULIE
Well it's true. You know why I think it is? ADD.

ERIC
You have ADD?

JULIE
Yes. That's why I'm so bad at housework.

ERIC
Oh is that it?

JULIE
I'm just saying, a deadline would be good.

ERIC
So, a deadline. "I love deadlines. I love the sound they make as they go whooshing past." Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy.

JULIE
I mean it.

CONTINUED: (2)

ERIC
Okay, so like a year or something.

JULIE
A year? A year? This thing weighs like two pounds. I have a full-time job. Sometimes I don't get home till 8 or 9 o'clock. It's crazy. It's crazy. Is it crazy?

ERIC
Yes. YES. Exactly.

INT. POWELL DEN - 2002 - DAY

We see Eric at the computer entering the requisite registering information on the entry page for Blogspot@Salon.com. Julie is next to him.

ERIC
Start blogging.

INT. POWELL DEN - 2002 - DAY

Cut between the computer screen and Julie. She takes a deep breath and starts to type --

JULIE (V.O.)
The Julie/Julia Project. The book: Mastering the Art of French Cooking, first edition, 1961, by Louisette Bertholle, Simone Beck. And of course, Julia Child, the woman who taught America to cook, and to eat. It's forty years later and no one can touch her. The Challenge: 365 days, 524 recipes. The Contender: Julie Powell. Government employee by day, renegade foodie by night. Risking her marriage, her job and her cat's well-being, she has signed on for a deranged assignment. One girl and a outer-borough kitchen with exactly twenty-six inches of counter space. How far it will go, no one can say....

She hits Send.

EXT. PARIS MARKET STREET - 1949 - DAY

It's hot in Paris.

Julia, carrying groceries, walks down a crowded Paris market street.

JULIA
(in her atrocious French accent, to the fruitier, to the butcher, to anyone she passes)
Bon jour. Bon jour. It faites chaud. Bon jour.

Everyone loves her.

Julia is taller than everyone else and her feet are larger than everyone else's. She's like a big tree.

PAUL (V.O.)
Dear Charlie: We're settled in finally and Julia loves it here. She wants to stay forever.

EXT. PARIS STREET - 1949 - DAY

Paul takes photographs of Paris as Julia chats up a grumpy chestnut vendor, who is charmed by her. He gives her extra chestnuts.

PAUL (V.O.)
You know how the French can be, dear brother, ill-tempered and difficult.

JULIA
(to Paul)
Everyone here is so delightful --

EXT. OYSTER BAR - 1949 - DAY

Julia chats up the unfriendly man opening the oysters, who's completely taken with her. He gives her an extra oyster.

PAUL (V.O.)
But Julia brings out the best in a polecat --

CONTINUED:

JULIA
(to Paul)
-- so charming --

PAUL (V.O.)
-- so she thinks they're the most wonderful people in the world.

EXT. PARK NEAR NOTRE DAME - 1949 - DAY

Julia and Paul walk in the park.

JULIA CHILD
I feel that I am French. I just must be.

They walk past a couple wheeling a baby carriage. Julia stares after them for just a moment.

PAUL (V.O.)
As for staying here forever, I wouldn't mind it myself.

INT. AMERICAN EMBASSY - 1949 - DAY

An exhibit of photographs of America that Paul has hung in the embassy. Julia and Paul at a cocktail reception, where the guests are congratulating Paul on the exhibit.

INT. PARIS RESTAURANT - 1949 - DUSK

Julia and Paul having dinner.

JULIA
It was a wonderful exhibit, Paul, I'm so proud of you.
(savoring the food)
French people eat French food every single day. I can't get over it.

Paul reaches in for a taste of Julia's cog au vin.

JULIA
I love you so much I'm going to let you take the first bite -- He tastes it. Delicious.

After a beat:

CONTINUED:

JULIA
What should I do, do you think?

PAUL
About what?

JULIA
I don't really want to go back into government work. But shouldn't I find something to do? None of the wives here do anything, but that's not me, it's just not me.
(beat)
I saw a notice on the Embassy bulletin board about hat-making lessons...

PAUL
You like hats.

JULIA
I do.

PAUL
What is it you really like to do?

A beat.

JULIA
Eat. I like to eat.

INT. HAT-MAKING CLASS - 1949 - DAY

Julia makes a hat.

EXT. PARIS BRIDGE/ISLAND - 1949 - DAY

Julia and Paul walk along the Seine. Julia wears a hat.

JULIA
I was thinking about bridge lessons.

INT. BRIDGE CLASS - 1949 - DAY

Julia takes a bridge class with THREE AMERICAN WOMEN and a BRIDGE TEACHER.

EXT. SHAKESPEARE & COMPANY - 1949 - DAY

Julia stands at one of the carrels outside the famous English-language bookstore in Paris, with a salesperson.

JULIA CHILD
Do you have any French cookbooks in English?

INT. BERLITZ SCHOOL - 1949 - DAY

Julia in her private French class with her teacher MADAME BERNHEIM.

JULIA
J'essaye d'acheter une livre de cuisine Francaise en Englaise, mais le --
(she doesn't know the word for it)
salesperson --

MADAME BERNHEIM
Vendeur ou vendeuse --

JULIA
Vendeuse. The point is there's no French cookbook in English, all I have is The Joy of Cooking by Irma Rombauer. Which is an excellent cookbook, but it's not French. I asked my friend Avis to look for one in the States --

MADAME BERNHEIM
En Francais, Madame Child --

JULIA
I thought I was speaking French.

INT. PARIS RESTAURANT - 1949 - NIGHT

A GROUP OF FRIENDS watch as Julia opens her birthday present

from Paul. It's a copy of Larousse Gastronomique, the famous bible of French cooking. She's thrilled. She plants a kiss on Paul's lips. A dessert arrives with a candle on it. Julia makes a wish. She blows out the candle.

INT. CHILD BEDROOM - 1949 - NIGHT

Julia is in bed, reading the Larousse Gastronomique. Paul gets into bed next to her.

JULIA
What can this mean? Beignez les cuisses -- wash the thighs?

PAUL
Bathe the thighs --

JULIA
En beurre. In butter, I know what that is. But then --

PAUL
Stuff the hen until she just can't take it any more.

JULIA
It doesn't really say that.

PAUL
Yes it does. I'll show you later, in the dictionary. I'll go through the whole recipe.

He starts to kiss her.

JULIA
Why don't I go to cooking school?

PAUL
Why don't you?

JULIA
I'm serious.

PAUL
So am I.

They kiss again.

PAUL
What if you hadn't fallen in love with me?

JULIA
But I did.

Paul reaches out and turns off his light.

CONTINUED:

ALARM GOES OFF AT 5:30 A.M.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - 2002- DAWN

Julie's hand gropes at the clock, turns off the alarm. She groans as she gets out of bed. We hear the sound of her computer --

JULIE (V.O.)
Yesterday was Tuesday, August 13, Day One, 364 days to go. I cooked artichokes --

FAST CUTS:

JULIE WHACKS AT THE STEM OF AN ARTICHOKE IN HER KITCHEN.... TAKES TWO POUNDS OF BUTTER OUT OF THE REFRIGERATOR.... WHIPS UP HOLLANDAISE SAUCE WITH A TON OF MELTED BUTTER.... BUTTER SPATTERS ON THE COOKBOOK PAGE.... JULIE AND ERIC EAT ARTICHOKES WITH HOLLANDAISE.... JULIE BLOGS AT HER COMPUTER NEXT TO A HAND-MADE CALENDAR THAT SAYS: 364 DAYS TO GO, 524 RECIPES TO GO.... SHE CHANGES THE NUMBER 524 TO 523...

JULIE (V.O.)
-- with hollandaise sauce which is melted butter that's been whipped into a frenzy with egg yolks until it's died and gone to heaven, and let me say this: is there anything better than butter? Think it over: every time you taste something that's delicious beyond imagining and you say, "What is in this?", the answer is always going to be, Butter. The day there's a meteorite heading toward the earth and we have thirty days to live, I am going to spend it eating butter. Here's my final word on the subject: you can never have too much butter.

INT. POWELL KITCHEN - NIGHT

JULIE SAUTES A PAN OF MUSHROOMS IN BUTTER..... TALKS TO AN IMAGINARY JULIA CHILD ....

JULIE
August 24 2002. Day eleven. A horrible day at work.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

JULIE (cont'd)
An old grandma who looked as if she wouldn't harm a fly called me a pencil-pushing capitalist dupe. But then I came home and cooked chicken with cream and mushrooms and port and it was total bliss. Here's the big news: I have been cooking mushrooms the wrong way my entire life. Don't crowd the mushrooms, that's the secret. Otherwise they won't brown. Are you listening, whoever you are?

Eric comes into the kitchen and Julie gives him a taste from the pan. Delicious.

INT. DEAN & DELUCA - 2002 - DUSK

Julie takes a loaf of bread from the bakery counter and buys some fruit and some cheese and some olive oil.

JULIE (V.O.)
I got carried away in Dean & DeLuca last night and spent half my take-home pay, and the first thing I realized when I got to the subway --

She sees a gigantic bunch of dogwood.

INT. SUBWAY - 2002 - NIGHT

Julie comes down the subway stairs with the dogwood branches and her groceries.

JULIE (V.O.)
-- with my groceries, a bag of cat litter, a bottle of olive oil I absolutely could not live without and a huge bunch of branches was that the branches were probably not a good idea. They were slapping folks in the face right and left and I was sweating like as pig, not surprising since I've been way too busy cooking heart-attack-inducing food to bother exercising.

EXT. SUBWAY - 2002 - NIGHT

They subway rides from Manhattan to Queens.

CONTINUED:

JULIE (V.O.)
And then I came home and got a big vote of confidence from my mother.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - 2002 - NIGHT

Julie talks on a cell phone with her MOTHER, who has a Texas accent.

JULIE'S MOTHER (ON THE PHONE)
Remind me again why you're doing this --

JULIE
-- blog.

JULIE'S MOTHER(ON THE PHONE)
Whatever it's called.

JULIE
It's a regimen, Mom. It's like doing sit-ups every day --

JULIE'S MOTHER (ON THE PHONE)
It's just adding to the pressure.

JULIE
What pressure?

JULIE'S MOTHER (ON THE PHONE)
You have a full-time job, you have a husband, and now you're going to get sick from blogging --

JULIE
It's sort of like being in AA --

JULIE'S MOTHER
What are you saying?

JULIE
It gives you something you have to do, every day, one day at a time --

JULIE'S MOTHER
Julie, honey, you're not saying you're an alcoholic?

JULIE
I'm saying it's good for me to have short-term goals --

CONTINUED:

JULIE'S MOTHER (ON THE PHONE)
That is just silly, that is just plain silly. Tell me, who is reading this blog?

JULIE
People. People are reading it, I'm sure.

JULIE'S MOTHER (ON THE PHONE)
Well, I want you to stop. This is something you decided to do. You can decide not to if you want.

JULIE
No. Don't you get it? I just started. I can't stop. I have to finish. This is all I've got.

The phone battery dies.

JULIE
Hello? Stupid dead phone.

Julie hangs up. Eric looks hurt.

ERIC
Hey. It's not all you've got. You've got me.

JULIE
I know, I know, I didn't mean that.

INT. POWELL KITCHEN - 2002 - NIGHT

A box of eggs. A pan of water simmers.

JULIE (V.O.)
Today I made my first egg. Etc.

Julie and her girlfriend Sarah hover in the small kitchen.

SARAH
Explain to me how you never ate an egg in your whole life?

JULIE
I've had eggs in, like, cakes. I've just never had an egg-egg. I was a very willful child. It's simmering.

CONTINUED:

SARAH
(reading from the Julia Child cookbook)
"Break one of the eggs and let it fall in."
(continued)

Julie breaks an egg and it falls into the water. She and Julie stare into the pot, mesmerized.

SARAH
"Immediately and gently push the white over the yolk with a wooden spoon for 2 to 3 seconds."
Immediately!

Julie pushes the white with a wooden spoon. The egg falls apart. The pot is filled with yucky white strands of eggs.

JULIE
Euuuw! Disgusting!

SARAH
Maybe the eggs aren't fresh. Julia says they have to be fresh.

JULIE
They are fresh.

SARAH
God, don't bite my head off, I'm just quoting Julia.

INT. SAME SCENE - MINUTES LATER

Eric has now joined Julie and Sarah in the kitchen. Eric lifts a poached egg out of the water and onto a plate:

All of them stare at it. It's messy, but it's a poached egg.

SARAH
Hello.

ERIC
How cute is this?

JULIE
Welcome.

INT. POWELL LIVING ROOM - 2002 - LATER

Eric and Julie and Sarah are about to eat poached eggs with bechamel sauce.

Julie wrinkles her nose and tastes it.

JULIE
I thought eggs were going to be greasy and slimy, but they taste like cheese sauce. Yum.
(lifts her glass)
Julia Child, you are so good.

Takes another bite.

ERIC
And may I say, excellent wine.

Julie looks just a little guilty for a moment.

SARAH
Do you think Julia knows about you?

JULIE
I wish. I have this fantasy that she comes for dinner and I show her my new lemon zester and we become very close. But the truth is, no one knows about me. I feel like I'm just sending things into this giant void.

SARAH
Which reminds me, Annabelle's blog. Have you seen it lately?

JULIE
Yes.
(grudgingly)
It's sort of funny.

ERIC
Is it?

SARAH
She's gotten involved with some rich guy with a plane. His name is Lester. They had sex --
(she points up to the sky)
It's a huge hit. People love it.

A beat while Julie absorbs this.

CONTINUED:

JULIE
What do you think it means if you don't like your friends?

SARAH
It's completely normal.

ERIC
Men like their friends.

SARAH
Who was talking about men? We were not talking about men.

Julie tastes the last bit of egg.

JULIE
Twenty-nine years without eggs. What was I thinking?

JULIE (V.O.)
So it's five weeks down, 47 to go, and I feel fantastic.
(continued)

INT. JULIE POWELL'S CUBICLE - LMDC - 2002 - DAY

Julie at her desk. On the wall of her cubicle is a picture of Julia Child.

JULIE (V.O.)
Sometimes I can't help wondering, is anyone out there reading me? But I'm sure you are. Aren't you? Somebody? Anybody?

On her computer screen we see the Julie/Julia blog and the words: "Sometimes I can't help wondering, is anyone out there reading me? But I'm sure you are. Aren't you? Somebody? Anybody?"

Underneath we see: Comments(1).

On Julie, thrilled. She stands up and looks over the divider at Ernestine, who works in the cubicle next to hers.

JULIE
Ernestine, I have a comment,

She sits down, clicks on the comment. The comment comes up: "Julie, it's your mother. I still don't understand why you're doing this. I seem to be your only reader."

CONTINUED:

JULIE
My mother. Doesn't count.

The phone rings. She answers it.

JULIE
Julie Powell ....

AN EGG IN A SLOTTED WOODEN SPOON

CORDON BLEU INSTRUCTOR
Ladies, are you ready?
(continued)

INT. CORDON BLEU COOKING SCHOOL - 1949 - DAY

A classroom at the Cordon Bleu. Julia and TWO YOUNG AMERICAN HOUSEWIVES stand in a kitchen with a CORDON BLEU INSTRUCTOR.

INSTRUCTOR
Today we will begin by learning to boil eggs.

On Julia, disappointed.

INT. OFFICE OF MADAME BRASSART - CORDON BLEU - 1949 - DAY

MADAME ELIZABETH BRASSART, the head of the Cordon Bleu School, a humorless French woman, sits at her desk listening to Julia.

JULIA
I was hoping for something more advanced, Madame Brassart --

MADAME BRASSART
But you are not an advanced cook --

JULIA
But I know how to boil an egg.

MADAME BRASSART
Do you know how to bone a duck?

JULIA
No, but that's exactly the sort of thing I'd hoped to learn --

MADAME BRASSART
There is one other class but you will not like it.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

MADAME BRASSART (cont'd)
It's for professionals, which you will never be, I am sure. All men. All GI's. And very expensive. I cannot imagine you would ever want to pay the tuition.

JULIA
How much?

INT. CORDON BLEU BASEMENT KITCHEN - 1949 - DAY

SEVEN MEN, all American World War II vets in their twenties or thirties, in a basement kitchen with CHEF MAX BUGNARD, French, white-haired, mustache, in a chef's toque and white chef's jacket.

The door to the kitchen opens. Julia is standing there, in a twin sweater set, skirt and her pearls.

The men look at her.

JULIA
Bon jour.

On the men. One rolls his eyes. Another smirks.

CHEF MAX BUGNARD
Bon jour, Madame.

INT. SAME SCENE - LATER

The G.I.'s briskly chop onions. The men have it down pat: their knives rock back and forth, the onions fall like snowflakes.

Julia chops too, but she's nowhere near as competent. There's a whack every time the knife hits the counter top, and the onions come down in thick chunks.

Julia leans down to look at what the men are doing. The man next to her gives her a condescending glance.

She tries to adjust her own technique. Not quite right. Suddenly Chef Bugnard is there. He takes Julia's knife and shows her how to hold it so that she chops by rocking the knife back and forth.

INT. CHILD KITCHEN - 1949 - NIGHT

Tears roll down Julia's face:

CONTINUED:

She's diced what looks like thirty onions. There are minced onions everywhere. A dish towel is tucked into her apron.

Paul walks into the kitchen. He waves his hands in front of his face -- the odor is overwhelming. He starts to back out of the kitchen.

PAUL
Are you being a little over-competitive, do you think?

JULIA
You should have seen the way those men looked at me. As if I were a frivolous housewife looking for a way to kill time.

She wipes herself off, starts to chop again, fiercely.

INT. CORDON BLEU BASEMENT KITCHEN - 1949 - DAY

Julia chops more brilliantly than any of the men.

Several of the G.I.'s notice.

INT. CORDON BLEU BASEMENT KITCHEN - 1949 - DAY

Julia and the GI's put eggs into their frying pans and start to gently maneuver them with a fork. Chef Bugnard watches.

Madame Brassart walks into the room.

Everyone jerks their pans back and forth and then flips omelets. Julia's is perfect.

CHEF BUGNARD
Well done, Madame Child.

Julia smiles. She can't help looking at Madame Brassart, who turns and walks out of the room.

JULIA (V.O.)
Dear Avis: I'm in my third week at Le Cordon Bleu and I'm in utter bliss. Every morning the alarm goes off at 6:30 and I leap out of bed.
(continued)

ALARM GOES OFF AT 6:30 A.M.

INT. CHILD BEDROOM - 1949 - DAY

Julia turns off the alarm, leaps out of bed.

INT. CORDON BLEU BASEMENT KITCHEN - 1949 - DAY

JULIA (V.O.)
By 7:30 I'm in class, in my apron, peeling potatoes. My teacher speaks so quickly I'm sometimes lost, but I'm way ahead of the others in the class, all of them men --
(continued)

THE CLASS ROLLS OUT PASTRY DOUGH ... JULIA DEFTLY FLIPS TART PASTRY INTO A TART PAN...

JULIA (V.O.)
-- and all of them very unfriendly until they discovered I was fearless, something I realized at about the same time they did --
(continued)

ON JULIA, STABBING A LOBSTER BETWEEN THE EYES AS ALL THE G.I.'S LOOK ON. THEY CAN'T HELP BUT ADMIRE HER.

JULIA (V.O.)
The morning class ends at 12:30 and I go home and make lunch for Paul.
(continued)

INT. CHILD KITCHEN - 1949 - DAY

Julia and Paul eat lunch. Omelets. Apples and cheese. Julia stands to clear the table. She has plates in both hands. Paul puts his arms around her, pulls her toward him.

JULIA (V.O.)
Then Paul takes a nap --
(continued)

INT. CHILD BEDROOM - PARIS - 1949 - DAY

Julia and Paul make love in the afternoon.

EXT. CHILD APARTMENT - 1949 - DAY

Julia and Paul come out of their building. They kiss. They go off in different directions.

JULIA (V.O.)
-- and later in the afternoon he

goes back to the embassy and I go back to school.

INT. CORDON BLEU COOKING SCHOOL - 1949 - DAY

Julia in a large demonstration kitchen watching Chef Max Bugnard use a mortar and pestle, chop a carrot. It flies into the air and onto the floor. He picks it up, wipes it on his apron, and goes on chopping.

CHEF MAX BUGNARD
If you make a mistake, do not apologize. Joy! Fun! This is what matters!

EXT. PARIS MARKET - 1949 - DUSK

Julia shops for dinner. She talks to the fish merchant, the baker, etc. Her French is much improved, though her accent remains problematical.

JULIA (V.O.)
Incidentally, my father is horrified that I'm going to cooking school and offered to give me extra money to hire a cook. I'm probably the only American I know in Paris who thinks shopping for food is as much fun as buying a dress.
(continued)

Julie picks out two perfect peaches, sniffs them, takes a bite of one. The peach juice drips down her face. Delicious.

JULIA (V.O.)
Of course you'd think so too if you lived in a country where absolutely nothing comes in my size.

Julia carries home bags full of food. All the merchants greet her on her way home.

INT. CHILD LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Julia types on her Underwood typewriter and files her notes into an organized filing system. It's cold. Paul and Julia are both wearing padded Chinese jackets.

JULIA (V.O.)
By the way, did you know that if you don't dry meat, it won't brown properly? People just don't know these things. Irma Rombauer doesn't say a word about it in The Joy of Cooking.

INT. CHILD KITCHEN - 1949 - NIGHT - OMIT

INT. CHILD KITCHEN - 1950 - NIGHT

JULIA (V.O.)
Avis, I'm in heaven here. I've been looking for a career all my life and I've found it.

The Kitchen is now full of copper pots, pans, whisks, wooden spoons. Julia is cooking dinner as Paul comes up the stairs,

carrying the mortar and pestle. Julia is overjoyed.

INT. CHILD LIVING ROOM - 1950 - NIGHT

A dinner party for eight people. It's Valentine's Day. Paul and Julia wear and their guests wear red paper hearts. Julia serves the fish. Everyone oohs and ahs. "Bon Appetit."

PAUL ;
Julia and I first met in Ceylon, in the OSS --

JULIA
But he didn't notice me at first.

PAUL CHILD
I did too. I noticed your legs --

JULIA
He didn't really. But then we were both sent to China.

As she serves the food, she tastes a morsel of it.

CONTINUED:

JULIA
Perfectly delicious. If I do say so myself.

DINNER GUEST #1
Julia, when you finish your term, you'll be teaching at Cordon Bleu --

JULIA
I don't think so. The woman runs it absolutely hates me.

DINNER GUEST #2
No one could possibly hate you.

JULIA
That's true, but she does.

DINNER GUEST #3
Were you spies?

PAUL CHILD
Us? No.

DINNER GUEST #2
You were in the Office of Strategic Services and you weren't spies?

JULIA
I was only a file clerk.

PAUL
(re: himself)
Maps. Exhibits.

JULIA
He designed the secret war rooms for General Montbatten. He was single-handed responsible for ending the war --

PAUL
Well it was dragging on. Someone had to do it.

PAUL
We were in China, just friends, and one night, the two of us went out to dinner --
(stands, lifts his glass to Julia)
And it turned out to be Julia, it turned out to be Julia all along.
(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

PAUL (cont'd)
Happy Valentine's Day, darling girl. You are the butter to my bread, the breath to my life --

Everyone says "Awwwww" and toasts.

INT. CHILD KITCHEN - 1950 - NIGHT

Julia cooks dinner, Paul watches.

PAUL CHILD (V.O.)
Julia in front of her stove has the same fascination for me as watching a kettle drummer at the symphony.
(continued)

Julia, a spoon in each hand, stirs both pots.

PAUL CHILD (V.O.)
The oven door opens and shuts so fast --
(continued)

The oven door opens and shuts.

PAUL CHILD (V.O.)
-- you hardly notice the deft thrust of a spoon as she dips into a casserole --
(continued)

A spoon dips into a casserole.

PAUL CHILD (V.O.)
-- and up to her mouth for a taste-check like a perfectly-timed double-beat on the drums.
(continued)

On Julia's lips, as she tastes. A double-beat on drums.

PAUL CHILD (V.O.)
Then with her bare fingers she snatches a set of cannelloni out of the pot of boiling water --
(continued)

Julia's fingers snatch a set of cannelloni out of the boiling water.

PAUL CHILD (V.O.)
-- and she cries --

CONTINUED:

JULIA
Wow, these damn things are as hot as a stiff cock.

INT. POWELL BEDROOM - 2002 - NIGHT

Julie is on the couch, reading from a biography of Julia Child. Eric has just come in, he's taking off his jacket. He's holding the mail, which includes a small package.

ERIC
She said what?

JULIE
I know.

ERIC
As hot as ... ?

JULIE
I know. I'm shocked. It's from a letter Paul Child wrote to his twin brother Charlie in 1950, when Julia was just starting classes at Le Cordon Bleu.

Eric tosses Julie a small brown package that came in the mail. Julie opens it.

ERIC
So Julia and Paul?
(he makes a gesture for fucking)
Beaucoup beaucoup?

JULIE
I know. Just goes to show you.

ERIC
What?

JULIE
You can never tell about a person's sex life by looking at them. They were so in love.

Inside the package is a bottle of Religious Experience Hot Sauce and a letter.

JULIE
Hot sauce! From a reader! Isn't that remarkable?
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

JULIE (cont'd)
And today I had twelve comments from readers, and I didn't know any of them --

FAST CUTS:

JULIE OPENS ANOTHER PACKAGE: TOMATO PASTE FROM A READER.
JULIE OPENS ANOTHER PACKAGE: VANILLA BEANS FROM A READER.

JULIE (V.O.)
Thanks to all my faithful readers for this loot. I have now completed 65 recipes in 47 days...

JULIE CHOPS, DICES, SLICES AND WE SEE THE FOOD SHE'S COOKING: ROAST DUCK WITH CHERRIES, CROWN ROAST OF LAMB, ROAST PORK WITH POTATOES AND ONIONS...

JULIE (V.O.)
... ((change))87 recipes in 59 days...

JULIE'S CATS WATCH HER COOK ...

JULIE (V.O.)
... ((change) 103 recipes in just over two months ... Lobster Thermidor is coming up and I am going to have to murder and dismember a crustacean. How will I ever do this? Last night our sleep machine, the one we have by our bed to drown out the noise of freight trucks rumbling past our apartment, was speaking to me and it was saying, "Lobster killer, lobster killer, lobster killer.

INT. A TANK OF LOBSTERS IN A FISH MARKET - 2002 - DAY 88

Julie and Eric watch as a FISHMONGER fishes three large lobsters out of the tank and puts them into a big brown bag.

JULIE
(to Eric)
One of my readers said if you put the lobsters into the freezer it sort of numbs them --

INT./EXT. BRONCO - 2002 - DAY

As Julie and Eric drive home from the fish market.

JULIE
Then I got another comment that said, "Man up! Kill the damn lobster! Just plunge a knife into the spinal cord! Do it!"

They stop at a stop light.

There's a rustling noise. The lobsters in the bag are moving. Julie's eyes widen in horror.

ERIC
(as in a scary movie)
It's alive ...

JULIE
Eric!

The lobsters move again.

ERIC
"Lobster killer, lobster killer..."

Julie unhitches her seat belt and turns. The shopping bag of lobsters rustles.

She opens the bag and looks inside.

The lobsters look out at her. A tentacle waves.

JULIE
Oh God.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - 2002 - DUSK

Eric is hanging a sign over the dining table that says "Happy Birthday Julie."

Julie is in the kitchen, in sweats, reading from Mastering the Art of French Cooking. The bag of lobsters is on the kitchen floor. There's a pot of water, wine and herbs boiling on the stove.

CONTINUED:

JULIE
"If you object to steaming a live lobster, plunge the point of a knife into the head between the eyes." Oh, Julia, you make it sound so simple.

She rips the bag open. There are the lobsters. Alive.

Eric comes into the kitchen.

ERIC
(quoting from the Talking Heads song)
Lobster killer --

JULIE
Eric! Get out of here --

Eric walks out of the kitchen and heads for the den.

JULIE
(calling out to him)
I don't need you at all. You are completely useless. I'm just going to throw them into the water and put the lid on and that will be that.

ERIC
Fine.

She takes a huge forceps. Picks up one of the lobsters and dangles it over the pot of boiling water. It wiggles madly in the air. Grimacing, she drops it into the pot. Splash.

She whirls quickly back, picks up the second lobster, drops it into the pot. Another splash. And now the third.

Then she finds the lid and slams it onto the pot.

Done.

Suddenly there's a horrible thumping noise from inside the pot.

The top flies off the pot and onto the floor with a clatter.

JULIE
(at the top of her lungs)
Aaaaaahhhhhh!

INT. POWELL LIVING ROOM - 2002 - DAY

Julie runs screaming out of the kitchen toward the den.

She goes into the den and disappears.

Eric comes out of the den and runs toward the kitchen.

INT. JULIE POWELL'S DEN - 2002 - DAY

Julie sits on the couch in the den, covering her ears.

We can hear noise in the kitchen as Eric puts the lid back onto the lobster pot. A certain amount of thumping is still audible.

And then silence.

Julie slowly uncovers her ears.

INT. JULIE POWELL'S KITCHEN - 2002 - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Julie tentatively looks into the kitchen. There's Eric. The cover is on the pot. The water is boiling. The lobsters are cooking.

ERIC
Under control.

JULIE
You are a saint. Thank you thank you thank you.

She kisses him. It turns into a real kiss. It could turn into something. But mid-kiss Julie r look at her watch. opens her eyes, steals a

JULIE
I can't, I can't, I have so much to do --

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julie's brother TIM and his girlfriend ANNETTE and Sarah and Sarah's boyfriend GARTH come up the stairs to the apartment. Tim is carrying a cake box. "Happy Birthday, Happy Birthday."

Julie appears. She's wearing a vintage dress, a cardigan, a hat and an apron. She's dressed as Julia Child.

CONTINUED:

Pinned to her chest is a paper version of Julia's Ecole des Trois Gourmettes cooking school insignia.

JULIE
(imitating Julia)
Bon Appetit!

Everyone says "Bon Appetit" back, all imitating Julia.

INT. POWELL LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Julie, Eric, Tim, Annette, Sarah and Garth at the table eating lobster Thermidor.

JULIE
Here's an incredible thing: when Julia and Paul met, she was a virgin.

ANNETTE
Really?

SARAH
How does anyone know this?

JULIE
There are all these letters Julia wrote to her friend Avis de Voto, and Paul wrote to his brother and no one ever threw anything out as far as I can tell. When they got married she barely knew how to boil an egg. Isn't that incredible? I am obsessed with her, totally obsessed --

ERIC
She's totally obsessed.

JULIE
Who wants more? Too bad. Because there is none.

Everyone laughs.

JULIE
I mean, lobster -- major bucks.

TIM
Why don't you put a Paypal thing on the web site? Then people could send money in if they felt like it.

CONTINUED:

GARTH
Absolutely. You have fans. Your readers love you --

JULIE
I do? I have fans?

TIM
Yes. You do.

She reaches over for Eric's hand, squeezes it.

JULIE
I have fans.
(beat)
Well I can't ask them for money.

ANNETTE
Why not?

ERIC
You wouldn't be asking for money. You're just putting a Paypal thing on the web site and if they feel like sending money they can.

Everyone stands to help clear.

SARAH
I think you should do the Paypal thing. Then we could have more lobster.

INT. SAME SCENE - LATER

Julie blows out the candle, cuts her birthday cake for her guests.

ERIC
Happy birthday sweetheart.

She opens a present from Eric.

Julie is overwhelmed. It's a string of pearls.

JULIE
Just like Julia's.

ERIC
Only hers were probably the real deal.

CONTINUED:

JULIE
They're beautiful.

Everybody at the table says "Awwwwwww" or something like it.

Julie lifts her glass.

JULIE
I'm thirty. And I thought it was going to be terrible. But thanks to you --
(toasts Eric)
-- and thanks to Julia, it feels like I'm going to get through --

INT. POWELL LIVING ROOM - LATER

Julie sleeps on the couch, in her clothes.

We hear the running water in the kitchen as Eric finishes the dishes. Then he turns the water off and comes into the living room. He sees Julie, asleep on the couch.

He walks over to her.

ERIC
Hey.

No response.

He heads toward the other end of the loft living room, where the bed is.

INT. JULIE'S CUBICLE - DAY

On the computer we see the blog and the words: "COMMENTS (53)"

Julie stands up to talk to Ernestine, who's on the phone.

JULIE
Fifty-three comments on my lobster blog!

Julie's phone rings.

JULIE
Julie Powell.

CONTINUED:

VOICE ON PHONE
Is this the office I speak to if I have a problem?

JULIE
Yes, sir. What is your problem?

ERIC
Too much food, not enough sex.

JULIE
Eric? That is not funny.

ERIC
I thought it was pretty funny.

JULIE
Okay it was.

Cut back and forth:

INT. ARCHEOLOGY MAGAZINE - 2002- DAY

Eric on the phone to Julie in his office at Archeology Magazine, where he is associate editor.

ERIC
Hey. Guess what? You're the third-most popular blog on Salon.com.

JULIE
I am? I am!

EXT. QUEENS SUBWAY - 2002 - DAY

Eric and Julie walk down the subway stairs.

JULIE
I figure that for every one who writes in there are, I don't know, hundreds who don't.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - NIGHT

Eric in the bathroom. Julie getting ready for bed.

JULIE
It's like there's this whole group of people who are sort of connected to me...

CONTINUED:

She gets into bed.

JULIE
They need me in some way. Like, if I didn't write, they would really be upset.

ERIC
They'd probably take, like, poison, try to kill themselves.

She hits the pillow. Falls fast asleep. On Eric, awake. He opens a drawer next to the bed and takes out a package of Tums.

INT. PARTY - AMERICAN EMBASSY BALLROOM - 1951 - NIGHT

A large party at the Embassy. We follow a group of women to:

INT. AMERICAN EMBASSY LADIES' LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Julia is powdering her nose at a dressing table and talking to a WOMAN AT PARTY. SIMONE "SIMCA" BECK, a stylish French woman, is at a dressing table nearby.

JULIA
I don't know what to do. I can't get the damn woman to schedule my test --

SIMCA
Madame Brassart? Is that the woman you are speaking of? She is a bitch.

JULIA
She is, isn't she? I think she's almost the only person I honestly can't stand.

SIMCA
Eh bien, she is not the only person I can't stand.

She laughs merrily.

WOMAN AT PARTY
Do you two know each other? You should. Julia Child, Simone Beck.

CONTINUED:

SIMCA
Simca. And this is my friend Louisette Bertholle --

LOUISETTE BERTHOLLE is a very chic French woman who's a little ditzy.

LOUISETTE
Bon soir.

WOMAN AT PARTY
I can't believe you two haven't met, you're all such wonderful cooks. Simca and Louisette are writing a cookbook --

LOUISETTE
For Americans.

JULIA
Really?

SIMCA
Why do you need to take a stupid test?

JULIA CHILD
To get my diploma. So I can teach.

SIMCA
You don't need a diploma to teach --

JULIA
You're probably right. Avis says the same thing.

LOUISETTE
Who is Avis?

JULIA
My friend Avis DeVoto who lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She's very wise. But I can't help it, I want a diploma. I'm very conventional.

The women stand and walk out to the party.

INT. AMERICAN EMBASSY BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

SIMCA
Well, write to the horrible Madame Brassart and threaten her.

JULIA
Threaten her? With what?

LOUISETTE
The United States of America.

SIMCA
Tell her the American Ambassador personally wants you to take the examination --

She waves airily toward the AMERICAN AMBASSADOR, a stuffy-looking man at the other end of the room.

JULIA
Oh I couldn't do that, I couldn't possibly. Heavens no. The American Ambassador? I don't even really know him.

SIMCA
Of course you can.

JULIA (V.O.)
Dear Madame Brassart: Everyone at the American Embassy, including my close friend the Ambassador, will all be very surprised if I am not allowed to take my examination --

INT. CORDON BLEU COOKING SCHOOL - 1951 - DAY

Julia sits at a table with pen and paper with Madame Brassart looming over her.

MADAME BRASSART
You will write the recipes for ceufs Mollets, Cotellettes de Veau en Surprise, and Creme Renversee au Caramel ...

JULIA
Cotelletes de Veau en Surprise?

MADAME BRASSART
Oui.

CONTINUED:

Madame Brassart leaves the room.

On Julia. Long pause.

INT. DEHILLERAN - 1951 - DAY

Julia with Simca and Louisette, in the famous Paris cooking supply store.

JULIA
I had no idea what a veal en surprise was. None. We cooked it in class, it's a veal chop with mushrooms in a paper bag. That's the surprise -- you open the bag. Surprise! Veal with mushrooms! I have never flunked a test in my life. I am an A student. I am diligent.

SIMCA
You can ask to take it again.

JULIA
I can?

SIMCA
Of course. Meanwhile, you can come teach with us.

JULIA
Me?

LOUISETTE
Why not?

INT. CORDON BLEU COOKING SCHOOL - 1951 - DAY

Madame Brassart grimly hands Julia another test.

MADAME BRASSART
Is it true? You plan to teach?

JULIA
Yes. We're going to teach Americans in Paris to cook.

MADAME BRASSART
Madame Child, I must tell you, you have no real gift for cooking.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

MADAME BRASSART (cont'd)
But Americans will not know the difference.

Madame Brassart leaves the room.

Julia glares after her. She starts to write.

INT. JULIE POWELL'S LIVING ROOM - 2003 - NIGHT

Julie is at the computer.

JULIE (V.O.)
We are entering aspics ETC. An aspic is sort of beef jello with things etc

We see the hand-made calendar, which says Day: 165, Recipes to go: 236.

Eric comes in with a bag and Pulls out a calf's foot.

INT. POWELL KITCHEN - 2003 - NIGHT

The kitchen is a disaster. Julie is unmolding an aspic with chicken livers over the sink. She turns it onto a plate. Nothing happens. Turns it again. Nothing happens. Finally she succeeds, but the aspic hasn't set and it ends up in the sink, slithering down the drain.

JULIE
Shit!

Eric appears in the doorframe.

ERIC
How many more aspics are there?

JULIE
Eight.

ERIC
No one will know if you don't do them. It's not like there's like the aspic police or something. You could lie.

JULIE
I can't. I just can't. Julia will know. It's like she's watching. I'm under her influence.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

JULIE (cont'd)
I'm becoming a much better person because of her. YUCK! THE SINK!!!

The sink is stopped up. Brown gook is coming out of the drain.

JULIE
Look at this. I hate it here. Ecch. Did you put something down the sink?

ERIC
You put something down the sink. Aspic. You hate it here?

JULIE
How am I supposed to cook anything in this kitchen? No wonder my mold fell apart. I don't suppose we have Drano.

ERIC
Not unless you bought it.

JULIE
I do all this and I'm supposed to buy Drano too?

ERIC
Right now you are so not under the influence of Julia Child.

Eric leaves the kitchen.

JULIE
What if I don't make my deadline? I'll have wasted a year of my life! I'll have turned myself into a whale for nothing! I used to be a thin now I'm getting fat. On top of which, I have to bone a whole duck.

ERIC (THROUGH DOOR)
When?

JULIE
At some point. Can you even conceive of boning a duck? Of course you can't.

She kicks the trash can.

INT. JULIE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Julie is trussing a chicken, Eric is watching.

JULIE (V.O)
I'm sure you all remember, because it was only the day before yesterday, that I had a meltdown over my aspic and made a vow to transform myself into a better human being.

Eric walks toward the den. Julie struggles with the chicken and the string.

JULIE (V.O)
-- But I was trussing the poulet roti a la Normande, which is a chicken stuffed with chicken livers and cream cheese --

She starts to tie up the string around the chicken, but it slips out of her hands and flies onto the floor. The stuffing starts to ooze out of the cavity.

JULIE (V.O.)
-- and it fell on the kitchen floor and the stuffing fell out and made a big gooey mess --

JULIE
God dammit. God dammit to hell.

She sinks to the floor.

JULIE
Why am I doing this? I must be crazy.

She bursts into tears.

JULIE (V.O.)
So long story short, another meltdown. Worse than the last. I cried like a small, emotionally-disturbed child. And then I sank into major self-pity.

INT. POWELL DEN - CONTINUOUS

On Eric. He can hear Julie in the kitchen.

CONTINUED:

The phone rings.

Eric answers the phone.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Julie is sitting on the kitchen floor, looking miserable. Eric appears in the door frame.

ERIC
It's a reporter from the Christian Science Monitor. He wants to write about you.

JULIE
He does?

ERIC
I should tell him to call back, right?

JULIE
No, no, I'll take it --

She stands and goes to the phone. A remarkable recovery.

JULIE
Hello. Yes? Yes, it is that Julie Powell.... Really?... You want to bring who to dinner? Of course I know who it is, I know exactly who it is. Omigod! That would be great. That would be completely amazing.

She hangs up the phone, looks at Eric, screams.

JULIE
Omigod! Guess who's coming to dinner? Omigod!

INT. MENU - DAY

In Paul's handwriting: Poached fish, beef knuckle, salad and apple tarte Tatin, January 29, 1952 --

And pull back to reveal:

INT. JULIA CHILD'S KITCHEN - 1952 - CONTINUOUS

Julia, Simca and Louisette prepare for the first class at L'Ecole des Trois Gourmandes. They're wearing matching aprons decorated with the Ecole insignia.

On the wall is Julia's diploma from the Cordon Bleu.

Simca and Julia are preparing the ingredients. Louisette is sampling the wine. She lifts a glass.

LOUISETTE
To Les Trois Gourmandes. One for all and all for one.

Simca and Julia lift imaginary glasses.

JULIA
I had a horrible time converting these recipes from the metric system --

LOUISETTE
Measurements do not matter.

JULIA
Oh they do. They absolutely do.

She holds up a set of measuring cups.

LOUISETTE
What is that?

JULIA
Measuring cups. TI had them sent from America --

LOUISETTE
Ridiculous. A pinch of this, a dash of that, it's all about instinct --

SIMCA
(to Julia)
This is one of the biggest arguments Louisette and I had when we worked on our cookbook --

LOUISETTE
Which is finally finished. Sent off to the publisher. Soon Simca and I will be famous, we'll be the next Mrs. Joy of Cooking.

INT. JULIA CHILD'S KITCHEN - 1952 - LATER THAT DAY

Julia, Simca and Louisette, wearing their matching L'Ecole des Trois Gourmandes aprons, stand in Julia's kitchen with THREE AMERICAN WOMEN who are their first students.

JULIA (V.O.)
Dear Dorothy, Your sister Julia is now a cooking teacher. ETC.

SIMCA
Be careful it does not fall apart --

JULIA
But if it does, just push it back together. You're alone in the kitchen. Who's to know?

Simca takes a tarte tatin from the oven and flips it over for the class as Louisette and Julia watch.

A few of the apple slices slip sideways. Julia nudges them back into place.

JULIA
Remember, if it isn't perfect, never apologize. No excuses, no explanations --

Louisette waves and slips out of the room, pointing to her head as if she has a terrible headache. On Julia, surprised. She looks at Simca, who gives a Gallic shrug.

INT. GARE DU NORD - 1952 - DAY

Julia and Paul come down the stairway as a train arrives. Julia holds a bouquet of flowers.

JULIA
This morning she left the class before we even finished making the chocolate Bavarian cream. I can't believe it was the only time she could see a dentist.
(continued)

Passengers start to disembark from the train.

JULIA
Keep an eye out. We don't want to miss her.

CONTINUED:

PAUL
It's impossible to miss your sister.

A woman who looks very much like Julia Child but who's even taller gets off the train. For a moment we think it's Julia but it's not, it's her sister DOROTHY MCWILLIAMS. She towers over the other passengers who are disembarking.

JULIA
Dorothy! Dort!

Julia waves madly, runs to Dorothy and they embrace.

INT. PARIS CAFE - 1952 - DAY

Julia and Paul have lunch with Dorothy.

JULIA
All I think about all day is food, and then I dream about it all night

PAUL
She's obsessed. If I don't sit in the kitchen I don't see her at all.

JULIA
Last week, I dreamed I made cassoulet for dad and he hated it. He does not understand any of this --

DOROTHY
I almost feel sorry for him. He wanted so much for us to stay in Pasadena and marry Republicans and breed like rabbits.

JULIA
Why didn't we?

DOROTHY
Too tall. Let's face it. It's true. From the beginning, you just don't fit in, literally, so then you don't.
(to Paul)
Do not bait our father about politics when he comes here or he won't pick up the check --

CONTINUED:

PAUL
I can't promise that.

DOROTHY
He loves Senator McCarthy.

JULIA
I know.
(shrugs)
Pasadena.

DOROTHY
(at the same time)
Pasadena.

They cross their fingers to undo the jinx.

JULIA
Is this not the most wonderful cheese you have ever had in your life? Yes, the answer is yes!
(beat)
I got the chef at Chez La Mere Michel to show me how to make beurre blanc.

DOROTHY
What is it?

JULIA
Butter and a white wine vinegar reduction -- you whisk them together and the acid of the vinegar acts on the milk solids in the butter so that the butter, instead of melting, becomes light and creamy with a fantastic subtle...

PAUL
Tanginess.

JULIA
(just the word she was looking for)
Tanginess. Well, that's who I married.
(beat)
You serve it with fish. It's splendid. I'll make it for you while you're here. And Dort -- we're having a party for you.

CONTINUED: (2)

DOROTHY
???

JULIA
And by the way, there's a man I want to introduce you. He's very --

PAUL
Tall.

INT. JULIA CHILD'S BEDROOM - 1952 - NIGHT

Julia and Dorothy fasten each other's pearls. They look at themselves in the head-to-toe mirror. They look as good as they can possibly look. But neither of them is in any way stylish and they know it.

JULIA
Pretty good. But not great.

INT. PARIS APARTMENT - NIGHT

JOHN O'BRIEN, a very tall man, comes over to Julia and Paul.

JOHN O'BRIEN
Julia! There you are! Now where's this sister of yours? They all look around the room for Dorothy.

JULIA
There she is.

Dorothy is on the other side of the room, talking to a much shorter man named IVAN COUSINS. They're laughing.

JOHN O'BRIEN
I don't want to interrupt her conversation --

PAUL
With Ivan Cousins? They just met I can't imagine Dorothy running off with Ivan Cousins.

On Dorothy and Ivan. She towers over him. But they're clearly flirting.

Julia and Paul look at one another, surprised.

They look back to Ivan and Dorothy.

CONTINUED:

Dorothy is laughing wildly at something Ivan just said.

EXT. BOIS DE BOULOGNE - 1952 - DUSK

The chamber orchestra starts to play a wedding march. Julia comes down the aisle with a small bouquet, followed by her sister Dorothy on the arm of her father, JOHN MCWILLIAMS. McWilliams does not look at all happy.

Dorothy joins Ivan at the altar. She towers over him. They're madly in love. The MINISTER begins: "Dearly Beloved..."

EXT. TUILERIES - 1952 - NIGHT

Julia and Paul sit at a table with John McWilliams and his wife PHILA, Julia's stepmother. John looks disapprovingly at Dorothy and Ivan on the dance floor. Ivan is a fantastic dancer.

Also on the dance floor are Simca and her husband and Louisette and hers. Chef Max is also a guest.

PAUL
What a beautiful wedding.

John McWilliams grunts.

JULIA
He's such a lovely man --

JOHN MCWILLIAMS
I am not enthusiastic about this marriage.

PAUL
Well, you weren't enthusiastic about our marriage either.

JOHN MCWILLIAMS
(not giving an inch)
True.

PHILA
(trying to change the subject)
How's everything at the Embassy, Paul?

On Julia. This is even worse ... the subject has now switched to politics.

CONTINUED:

PAUL
Fine.
(a beat)
Well, not fine. They cut our library allowance by ninety per cent. Senator McCarthy has long arms --

Julia kicks Paul under the table. Paul decides to stop talking.

JOHN MCWILLIAMS
Senator McCarthy is a man who knows his mind. I admire a man who knows his mind.

Paul looks at Julia.

They're just going to drop the subject.

No they're not.

JULIA
We have friends in Washington who've lost their jobs after years of government service, for no reason whatsoever. Paul had to make a list of every book in the Embassy library so they can burn the ones they suspect are subversive --

JOHN MCWILLIAMS
Surely you're not suggesting that the French government is any better --

Julia looks at Paul helplessly.

PAUL
Shall we dance?

EXT. TUILERIES - 1952 - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Everyone dances to "Time After Time."

The camera pulls back on the beautiful tableau.

EXT. PARIS - DAY

Paul drives the blue Buick over the bridge.

EXT. CHILD APARTMENT - 1952 - DUSK

Paul picks up the mail from the concierge..

INT. CHILD KITCHEN - PARIS - 1952 - DUSK

Paul comes upstairs to the kitchen.

Julia is whipping up Mayonnaise. The kitchen is full of bowls of mayonnaise.

PAUL
And for dinner, mayonnaise?

He dips a finger into the bowl Julia is whipping up.

PAUL
It's good.

JULIA
It is, isn't it? I'm sending the recipe to Avis, I'm very excited about it. I think it's a breakthrough.

PAUL
Letter from your sister.

Paul hands her the envelope and Julia opens it.

JULIA
Dorothy's pregnant! Oh, Paul. Isn't it wonderful?

Julia bursts into tears.

Paul puts his arms around her.

JULIA
I'm happy, I'm just so happy.

INT. CAFE - PARIS - DAY

Julia is having coffee with Simca and Louisette.

JULIA
What I discovered is that if you warm the bowl just slightly before you beat in the egg yolk, it changes everything.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

JULIA (cont'd)
Foolproof mayonnaise, absolutely foolproof. I typed it up.

She hands them each a copy of her mayonnaise recipe.

Simca and Louisette look at each other and then back at Julia.

JULIA
You disagree?

SIMCA
About the warm bowl? Not at all. I am sure you are exactly right.

JULIA
(her mantra)
Scientific workability.

Simca and Louisette exchange another look. Clearly Simca is the one who is supposed to speak.

SIMCA
Julia, we have a little problem. Our editor --

LOUISETTE
For our cookbook --

SIMCA
-- thinks our book is not in English.

JULIA
But your book is in English.

SIMCA
They are giving it a rejection. But they suggest that if we are continuing with it, we should get a collaborator, who could take what we have and make it work for American cooks .... Would you do it, Julia?

JULIA
Would I do it?

WE HEAR THE SOUND OF TYPING, COMPUTER TYPING...

CONTINUED: (2)

ON A COMPUTER SCREEN:

JULIE (V.O.)
We are now going to play a round of "Guess Who's Coming To Dinner."
(continued)

INT. POWELL DEN - 2003 - DAY

As Julie types.

JULIE (V.O.)
This Wednesday I am going to be playing host to a distinguished guest. Clue Number One: The degree of separation between Julia Child and me is about to shrink by a factor of about a thousand.

INT. DEAN & DELUCA - DUSK/NIGHT

Julie buys beef stew meat and a chunk the butcher. She buys tiny onions, picking each one out very carefully to make sure it's perfect. Mushrooms, carrots, peas in the pod. She chats up the produce department manager.

JULIE (V.O.)
In answer to your questions, No it is not Amanda Hesser of the New York Times, or Nigella Lawson or Ina Garten. But here's Clue Number Two: I will be making Boeuf Bourguignon, which was the first dish our distinguished guest cooked upon reading Mastering the Art of French Cooking for the first time.

INT. POWELL KITCHEN - 2003 - NIGHT

FAST CUTS: JULIE CAREFULLY DRIES STEW MEAT.... JULIE BROWNS STEW MEAT IN THE CASSEROLE ... JULIE STIRS IN THE WINE AND IT SETS OFF A GUST OF STEAM ...

CONTINUED:

JULIE (V.O.)
Well since no one guessed my mystery guest, I'm going to have to tell you all -- it's Judith Jones, the editor who's responsible for getting Julia's cookbook published way back when, the woman who recognized history in an onionskin Manuscript. She's older, and probably not used to eating at ten o'clock at night. Which is why I am being diligent about this and making the stew the night before. And as I cook it, I almost feel as if Julia and I are communicating over space and time on a deep, spiritual, mystical level, although mostly I'm just talking to myself.

INT. SAME SCENE B13

As Julie sets the oven timer.

ERIC
How long does it take to cook?

JULIE
Two and a half hours.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - 2003 - NIGHT

A videotape of Dan Aykroyd as Julia Child on Saturday Night Live is on the television set. Eric and Julia watching.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - 2003 - NIGHT

Julie is asleep on the couch. The oven timer goes off.

Eric is in bed, asleep. The clock next to the bed says 1:32 a.m. The noise machine whirs away.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - 2003 - A FEW MINUTES LATER

The oven timer is still going off. Then it stops.

Julie, passed out in front of the television set, which is still on.

EXT. POWELL APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The sign over the pizza Parlor goes out and the gate comes down.

INT. SAME SCENE - 2003 - THREE HOURS LATER

The cat walks into the kitchen and watches the stove.

A truck rumbles past. Julie wakes up.

She sniffs. Something's burning.

JULIE
No! No no no no no!

Julie runs into the kitchen.

She takes the casserole out of the oven and removes the top of the casserole.

The boeuf bourguignon is burnt to a crisp.

JULIE
NO!!!!!!

INT. A STACK OF ONIONSKIN PAPER - DAY

And pull back to reveal:

INT. JULIA'S LIVING ROOM - 1952 - DAY

Julia is assembling paper to type on -- a top sheet, five sheets of onionskin, and carbon paper in between. Paul is making a drink. On the table is the 600-page manuscript for Simca and Louisette's failed cookbook.

JULIA
It's just a big dry collection of recipes. It doesn't work at all, it doesn't teach, it's horribly written. I'm going to have to throw most of it out and start all over again.
(continued)

She feeds paper into her typewriter.

CONTINUED:

JULIA
This has got to be a cookbook that makes French cooking accessible to Americans who don't have cooks. Who are servantless. Is that a word?

She starts to type.

ON TYPEWRITER
"This is a book for women who do not have cooks, for the servantless American cook" --

JULIA
I think it is a word.

On Paul. A beat.

PAUL
What if we have to leave Paris?

She stops typing.

JULIA
Why would we have to leave Paris?

PAUL
My assignment was for four years --

JULIA
So we still have time.

PAUL
We have eight months. But this cookbook isn't something you're going to finish in eight months --

JULIA
No but two years seems possible.

She starts typing again.

PAUL
What if they transfer us somewhere else?

She stops typing.

JULIA
Would they do that?

PAUL
They don't really care about me.

CONTINUED: (2)

JULIA
Oh Paul, of course they do.

PAUL
They don't really.

INT. FRENCH RESTAURANT - 1952 - NIGHT

Julia and Paul eat dinner.

JULIA
If we can't stay in Paris, I'll just mail the pages to Simca and Louisette and they're mail them back. That's why they invented the mail system and carbon paper and ~ onionskin copies. I can take the train to Paris whenever the three of us absolutely have to work together -- the two of us, actually, because as we know, Louisette does next to nothing. We'll still be somewhere in Europe, don't you think?

PAUL
Hard to know in the current political climate. Senator McCarthy doesn't like people like us.

JULIA
Us? What have we done?

PAUL
Nothing. But we were in China. That's practically sufficient.
(beat)
Meanwhile, we're still here.
(lifts his glass)
To the book --

JULIA
"French Cooking For All".
(beat)
Or "French Home Cooking"? Which do you think?

INT. CHILD LIVING ROOM - 1953 - DAY

As Julia types away. She pulls the paper and carbons out of the typewriter and writes the words "Top Secret" across the top of a recipe for Hollandaise Sauce. She puts the recipe, along with several others, into an envelope addressed to Avis DeVoto in Cambridge.

JULIA (V.O.)
Dear Avis: Enclosed is part of our cookbook, from the chapter on sauces. Naturally, it must not be shown to anyone unless you are sure they are not, never have been and won't have anything to do with the publishing business. It's a dog-eat-dog world and there are people who would love nothing more than to steal the Hollandaise recipe.

INT. PARIS SUBWAY - 1953 - DAY

Julia and Simca wait on the platform as the subway pulls into the station. Doors open, they get on.

JULIA
We're late. Do you think she'll be there?

SIMCA
Louisette? Of course she'll be there. It's at her house.

JULIA
I was just making a little joke. What is this about, anyway?

SIMCA
Louisette wouldn't tell me. She said it was a surprise.

JULIA
Maybe she's dropping out of the project. That would be heavenly.

SIMCA
Julia!

JULIA
Well it would.

INT. LOUISETTLE BERTHOLLE'S LIVING ROOM - 1953 - DAY

Sitting in a chair is an OLDER AMERICAN WOMAN in her late seventies. Louisette springs up to introduce her to Julia and Simca.

LOUISETTE
My friends, this is Irma Rombauer.

Julia is genuinely thrilled. So is Simca. IRMA ROMBAUER, author of The Joy of Cooking, is the most famous cookbook writer in America.

JULIA
Mrs. Joy!

INT. LOUISETTE BERTHOLLE'S DINING ROOM - 1953 - DAY

The four women eat lunch. Julia, Simca and Louisette utterly mesmerized.

IRMA
The first edition of The Joy of Cooking took me a year to write.

SIMCA
A year?

JULIA
Only a year? Including testing the recipes?

IRMA
(cheerfully)
Oh well I really didn't test all the recipes. There were so many of them.
(beat)
And then I found a publisher -- a small printer in St. Louis --

SIMCA
How much money did he pay you?

IRMA
Pay me? I paid him. Three thousand dollars.

JULIA
Three thousand dollars?

CONTINUED:

IRMA
I know. A small fortune. But I had a little life insurance money because my husband --
(she holds an imaginary a to her head and fires)

ALL THREE WOMEN
(horrified)
No!

JULIA
He killed himself?

IRMA
(moving right along)
Yes. And I thought, well, what else am I going to spend the insurance money on? Then the book began to sell, and Bobbs-Merrill picked it up, so now I had a real publisher --

LOUISETTE
And they gave you some money?

IRMA
Absolutely not. They swindled me. They stole my copyright, and now there's a new edition and guess what? They made me foot the bill for the index. And we spent so much time arguing about how much it was going to coat that the index is a complete calamity. If you're looking for "City Chicken," you are not going to find it under "C."

JULIA
Really.

IRMA
It's under "Drumsticks, Mock."

SIMCA
No!

LOUISETTE
(at the same time)
No!

EXT. CHILD'S APARTMENT - DAY

INT. CHILD STAIRCASE - DAY.

Julia and Paul come up the stairs.

JULIA
Every time I cooked something from The Joy of Cooking I had imaginary conversations with Irma about how she'd changed my life. But all she wanted to talk about was how her publisher had cheated her out of thousands of dollars in royalties. It made me realize there's not going to be anything simple about this getting-published business.

INT. CHILD FOYER/BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT - DUSK

Paul hands Julia a letter.

PAUL
From Avis.

Julia reads it, looks at Paul.

. JULIA
Avis loves my sauce chapter.

PAUL
That's wonderful.

Julia goes back to the letter.

JULIA
Oh no. She showed it to someone. Which I specifically asked her not to do. She showed it to an editor at Houghton Mifflin in Boston.
(reads on)
Paul! The editor showed it to the head of the publishing house and they want to publish our book! And they even want to give us an advance!

PAUL
How much are they offering you?

CONTINUED:

JULIA
Two hundred and fifty dollars! And when the book is finished, five hundred dollars more! Omigod, Paul! Seven hundred and fifty dollars!

She's overwhelmed.

JULIA
The editor loves it, she just loves it.

INT. MASTERING THE ART OF FRENCH COOKING - BOEUF BOURGUIGNON RECIPE - DAY

And pull back to reveal the burnt stew, sitting on the stove in:

INT. POWELL DEN - DAY

As Julie types on the computer and reads aloud, with Eric looking over her shoulder.

JULIE
So this morning, with the smell of burned stew still in the air, I woke up dying of stomach cramps. I called in sick ...

ERIC
(dictating)
"And went back to bed for several hours." Put it in. In case someone in your office sees it.

JULIE
And went back to bed for several hours.

EXT. QUEENS STREET - 2003 - DAY

JULIE (V.O.)
By noon, I was somehow able to straighten myself up to a standing position. I crabwalked myself to the market --
(continued)

Julie walks briskly down the street to an Astoria market.

INT. ASTORIA MARKET - 2003 - DAY

JULIE (V.O.)
-- bought the ingredients for boeuf bourguignon all over again --

Julie once again buys the ingredients for boeuf bourguignon.

EXT. QUEENS STREET - 2003 - DAY

JULIE (V.O.)
-- dragged myself home --

As Julie walks briskly home carrying her groceries.

INT. POWELL KITCHEN - 2003 - DAY

JULIE (V.O.)
And made another boeuf bourguignon.

Julie once again makes boeuf bourguignon. Boils bacon, peels onions, carrots, dries the beef, sautes beef, adds red wine.

JULIE (V.O.)
And for dessert, a raspberry bavarian cream.

She folds whipped cream into a raspberry base.

INT. SAME SCENE - LATER

Julie takes the boeuf bourguignon out of the oven and removes the lid. Beautiful.

JULIE (V.O.)
By the end of the day, I felt fine. Everything was perfect.

The sound of thunder.

JULIE (V.O)
I was cooking dinner for a legend, even though I'd never really heard of her until a few months ago --

She and Eric taste the boeuf bourguignon. It's delicious.

ERIC
Maybe she'll offer you a book contract.

CONTINUED:

Julie puts her fingers into her ears and plugs them up.

JULIE
What if she does, though? I mean, what would that mean? It would mean... I might be a writer.

She allows herself a little scream, leaps around the room, stops herself.

ERIC
How much money do you think people get for books?

JULIE
Like an advance? I don't have any idea.

ERIC
One hundred thousand dollars?

JULIE
(plugging her ears once again)
Don't say it.

The phone rings. Julie looks at her phone and at her watch.

JULIE
Hello.... Hi.
(beat)
I know.... I know.... I know.... It is here too. Cats and dogs. I know.... I know.... I know....
Well. Thanks. Bye.

She hangs up, looks at Eric. She scrunkles up her face.

ERIC
So not coming.

JULIE
That was the guy from the Christian Science Monitor. It's raining. We live in Long Island City. She's, like, older. This is so mortifying.

ERIC
But... on the bright side... more stew for us.

CONTINUED: (2)

JULIE
(snapping at him)
Just once could you not look on the bright side?

Eric goes to the kitchen, helps himself to a bowl of stew, sits at the table and starts to eat it.

ERIC
Yeah, well, it's not the end of the world --

JULIE
I thought, I really did think, I just did, I thought ... book contract. I did. Me, Judith Jones, happily ever after. And then we'd have a little money and we wouldn't have to live over a pizzeria for the rest of our lives.
(agitated)
How am I going to explain it? My readers are going to be really upset. They were so into it.

ERIC
"Your readers are going to be really upset."

JULIE
I never should have told everyone.

Eric goes into the kitchen for salt.

ERIC
They will live. Somehow. "Your readers" will live.

He salts the stew. A ton of salt.

JULIE
Is it bland? Thank you for telling me that. You almost let me feed Judith Jones bland boeuf bourguignon. This is a nightmare. I told everyone she was coming.

ERIC
They will survive. And when this year is over, and I cannot wait till it is, "your readers" will somehow get on with their lives.

CONTINUED: (3)

JULIE
And I won't? Is that what you're saying?

ERIC
I don't know. I have no idea. I mean, what's going to happen when you are no longer the center of the universe?

JULIE
You think I'm behaving like I'm the center of the universe?

ERIC
Yes. Yes I do.

JULIE
That's great. I'm finally, totally engaged in something ... okay, okay, maybe I'm being a little narcissistic --

ERIC
A little? On a scale of ten?

JULIE
Okay, a 9.3. But what do you think a blog is? It's "me me me" day after day.

ERIC
I thought it would be fun. How stupid was that? It just turns out to be a lot of what you call "meltdowns" but they don't feel like meltdowns, they feel like I'm living with a totally self-absorbed person who writes about this stuff for a bunch of complete strangers and it's all supposed to be a big adventure, but it's not, it's our life, it's our marriage, and here, in the room, it doesn't feel like an adventure, it feels like shit.

JULIE
It was your idea.

ERIC
I know. I am so sorry. What was I thinking?

CONTINUED: (4)

Julie turns, walks through the loft to the bathroom and slams the bathroom door.

A beat. Julie turns on the shower.

Hold on Eric.

He closes his eyes.

Goes to the bathroom door.

Opens it. Julie is obscured by the opaque shower curtain.

ERIC
(shouting over the noise of the water)
And I'll tell you something else. I am not a saint --

JULIE
(shouting back)
What?

ERIC
(shouting)
I am not a saint --

JULIE
(shouting)
Yes you are. --

ERIC
(shouting)
No I'm not, and it makes me feel like an asshole every time you say it.

He slams the door shut.

A beat. Julie turns off the shower.

Eric throws the bathroom door open again.

ERIC
And do not write about this in your blog.

JULIE
About what?

ERIC
About this fight.

CONTINUED: (5)

He slams the bathroom door shut again.

He walks down the stairs and out the door to the street. Another bang as the door shuts.

EXT. JACKSON AVENUE - NIGHT

Eric comes out the door and walks past the pizzeria and into the night.

INT. JULIE POWELL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Julie comes out of the bathroom, wrapped in a towel.

JULIE
Eric?

He's gone.

MOVING BOXES

INT. CHILD KITCHEN - PARIS - 1953 - DAY

Julia and Paul are moving. Boxes everywhere. Julia is sitting down, rubbing her eyes. She's in the midst of packing her vast collection of pots, pans, knives and miscellaneous kitchen accessories. She looks nostalgically around her kitchen. Paul comes upstairs.

PAUL
Julia? Are you all right?

JULIA
Fine. I'm perfectly fine.

JULIE (V.O.)
Dear Avis, We finished packing today and to tomorrow we leave beloved Paris for Marseilles. Paul has been appointed Cultural Affairs Commissioner for the South of France. I'm having a hard time pretending to be anything but devastated.

She walks out of the kitchen and starts downstairs.

PAUL
Where are you going?

CONTINUED:

JULIA
Out to buy bread.

EXT. BAKERY - DAY

Julia walks into the bakery and we hold on her through the window-full of crisp baguettes. The bakers come out of the kitchen, the baker's mother, the salesgirls. All of them hug and kiss Julia.

JULIA (V.O.)
The advantage of Marseilles that it won't have the distractions of Paris, so we'll be able to finish the book, although not on deadline. I realize I was very unrealistic about the deadline. At least we're still in France ...

FAST CUTS:

A VALENTINE'S POSTCARD OF JULIA AND PAUL DRESSED AS FRENCH ROYALTY IN 1954: VALENTINE'S GREETINGS FROM MARSEILLES.... A SHOT OF THE TYPEWRITER AS JULIA WRITES THE LETTER FROM MARSEILLES ... A VALENTINE'S POSTCARD OF JULIA AND PAUL SITTING IN A BUBBLE BATH IN 1955: HAPPY VALENTINES DAY FROM THE HEART OF OLD DOWNTOWN PLITTERSDORF ON THE RHINE.... JULIA TYPES AWAY IN THEIR PLITTERSDORF APARTMENT ....

JULIA (V.O.)
Dear Avis, I don't know what we've done to deserve it, but here we are in Germany -- actually in a suburb of Bonn called Plittersdorf on the Rhine, which sounds much more picturesque than it is. Paul is head of exhibits at the Embassy and T am immersed in chicken and duck, and by the way, there's no chance we'll make our new deadline. We'll be at least two more years, so our trip to Boston will have to wait.
(continued)

INT. JULIA CHILD'S APARTMENT IN BONN - 1955 - DAY

JULIA (V.O.)
Meanwhile, Paul has been called to Washington, we have no idea why --

CONTINUED:

Julia is just finishing boning a duck. Paul, on a step-ladder above her, takes photos. She heaps the stuffing in the center and shapes it into a loaf.

PAUL TAKES A PICTURE OF THE DUCK SKIN FOLDED AROUND STUFFING TO ENCLOSE IT COMPLETELY.

JULIA
They're going to promote finally. They have to.

PAUL
I don't see why they'd have to call me back to Washington to tell me that... They could just send a Telex. It would be much cheaper.

PAUL TAKES A PICTURE AS JULIA BEGINS TO SEW THE DUCK UP WITH A TRUSSING NEEDLE.

JULIA
Then they're going to reassign you. They'll ask you whether you'd prefer Paris, or Paris.

PAUL
It's possible. It's not likely, but it's possible.

JULIA
Maybe they'll make you head of the department. Why not? You do all the work.. You have all the ideas.

JULIA WRAPS THE DUCK IN PASTRY.

JULIA
If they're going to move us back to Paris, I could go look for an apartment while I'm there next week.

PAUL
(humoring Julia)
I promise to call you the minute they tell me they're transferring us back to Paris.

EXT. PARIS STREET - 1955 - DAY

Simca and Julia walk toward an outdoor cafe.

CONTINUED:

JULIA
We're just going to tell her that she should have a smaller share of the royalties since it's clear she can't put in the forty hours a week that you and I are spending --

SIMCA
Sixty is more like it. Eighty.

JULIA
Exactly. You and I are yaches enrages --

SIMCA
That's exactly what we are. Mad cows. But I can't bring myself to say this to Louisette. You're going to have to do it.

JULIA
I will do it. We must be cold-blooded. I shall love her much more once we get this settled.

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE - 1955 - DAY

Julia, Simca and Louisette having lunch. Louisette is fighting back tears.

JULIA
It's not that you aren't helping to some extent --

LOUISETTE
I am helping. It was my idea to add peas to the coq au vin recipe.

JULIA
We know, and it was a wonderful idea. But the book has turned into a magnum opus --

LOUISETTE
But we're a team. We are Les Trois Gourmandes. One for all --

JULIA
That's absolutely true, Louisette. And you're very valuable to the project --

CONTINUED:

LOUISETTE
Thank you.

Louisette blows her nose loudly into a handkerchief.

LOUISETTE
I am getting a divorce.

JULIA
What?

LOUISETTE
Jean-Luc is leaving me.

JULIA
I am so sorry. Oh, Louisette, { am so sorry. I feel terrible I even brought any of this up. Forget I even mentioned it.

Almost miraculously, Louisette stops crying. She folds her handkerchief and puts it back into her puree.

On Simca. She's stunned that Julia has given up.

SIMCA
But it isn't fair for Louisette to get the same amount of money that we do.

JULIA
Simca, this is not the time to discuss this --
(mouthing the words)
She's getting a divorce.

SIMCA
(to Julia)
But she doesn't do the work.
(to Louisette)
You don't do the work. So your share should be ten per cent.

LOUISETTE
Ten per cent???? Only ten per cent?

SIMCA
You're not doing the work.

LOUISETTE
Twenty-five.

CONTINUED: (2)

SIMCA
Fifteen.

LOUISETTE
Twenty.

SIMCA
Eighteen, and not a penny more. And where it says our names, I think it should say "By Julia Child and Simone Beck with Louisette Bertholle.

LOUISETTE
With?

SIMCA
And in smaller type.

Louisette's eyes well with tears.

JULIA
No no no no, Simca, our names should be exactly the same. And alphabetical. Alphabetical.

On Louisette, relieved.

EXT. SIMCA'S HOUSE - 1955 - DAY

Simca's CONCIERGE is sitting out in front as Julia and Simca return. She hands Julia an envelope.

HOUSEKEEPER
Une telegramme, Madame.

INT. SIMCA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Julia places a long distance call to Paul. She crosses her fingers.

JULIA
Paul. Tell me.

On Julia as her face falls. She sits down and we hear:

JULIA (V.O.)
Dear Avis: We have been through our own version of Kafka.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

JULIA (V.O.) (cont'd)
Paul was called to Washington, and in my innocence I thought it must be because the United States government had finally realized how valuable he was. Far from it. He was being investigated.

INT. USIA OFFICE OF SECURITY - 1955 - DAY

Paul is being interrogated by a panel of THREE MEN, including SCOTT MCLEOD, a security agent.

JULIA (V.O.)
He spent three days being grilled in a windowless room with a foot-high stack of papers ominously sitting on the table. They asked him about our friends, our books, our China years, our patriotism. They even asked him if he was a homosexual --

MCLEOD
Are you a homosexual, Mr. Child?

Paul laughs, then realizes it's not a joke.

PAUL
I am not a homosexual.

MCLEOD
This is not a joke.

PAUL
I'm well aware of that.

INT. JULIA CHILD'S BEDROOM - PLITTERSDORF - 1955 - NIGHT

Julia and Paul in bed.

PAUL
It was a nightmare, Julia. What am I going to do? I feel as if my entire life has been a waste. I'll have one more posting, then I'll retire, and then what?

JULIA
We'll figure it out.

CONTINUED:

PAUL
You at least have the book.

JULIA
It's your book too. It is. If it weren't for you, there wouldn't be a book. Not that Simca and I will ever be done with it.

PAUL
Some day you'll be done.

JULIA
I'm starting to wonder.

Paul turns out the light.

Hold on Julia and Paul, wide awake.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - DAWN

Julie's wide awake, in bed alone. It's 5:30 a.m.. She's miserable.

The boeuf bourguignon sits on the stove, cold and congealed, as Julie pads into the kitchen.

She puts the stew into the refrigerator.

She passes the dining table, still set for Judith Jones, and goes to the computer.

Sits down at it.

JULIE (V.O.)
So to wrap things up -- at 6:32 last night, guess who wasn't coming to dinner? That's right. It began pouring down rain and Judith Jones canceled. I was utterly crushed. And then I had a horrible fight with my husband and he left me.

On Julie, starting to cry. She deletes the last sentence.

JULIE (V.O.)
But the boeuf bourguignon was delicious, not that I ate it. As for the raspberry Bavarian cream, I am taking it to the office.

She hits the Send button.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

Julie comes out of the subway, carrying a large shopping bag.

The bottom of the shopping bag opens. The night before's uneaten raspberry Bavarian cream falls into the street.

INT. JULIE POWELL'S CUBICLE - LMDC - 2003 - DAY

MR. MISHER (V.O.)
Julie? Could you come in here?

Julie is in her cubicle, opening mail.

She stands up to go into her boss' office. As she does, Ernestine, in the next cubicle, catches her eye.

ERNESTINE
I didn't tell him, I swear.

INT. MR. MISHER'S OFFICE - LMDC - 2003 - DAY

Julie comes into Mr. Misher's office.

MR. MISHER
Feeling better?

JULIE
Much.

A beat.

MR. MISHER
So you burned the stew.

JULIE
Yes. But that's not why I didn't come to work. I didn't come to work because I had stomach flu.

MR. MISHER
(overlapping)
Stomach flu.
(beat)
Listen, it's a free country. But this little thing of yours on the Internet, I don't want to show up in it, okay? And if you don't feel like coming to work, let me know. Somebody will want this job. We're trying to do something here.

CONTINUED:

JULIE
I'm sorry.
(beat)
Nobody even reads my blog.

MR. MISHER
If that were true, I wouldn't know about it, would I? Anyone else would fire you. A Republican would fire you. Stomach flu. I'm not a schmuck.

INT. JULIE POWELL'S CUBICLE - LMDC - 2003 - DAY

She sits back down at her cubicle. Closes her eyes.

Opens them.

Picks up the phone. Dials a number.

ERIC (THROUGH FILTER)
You've reached the office of Eric Powell, associate editor of Archaeology Magazine. Leave a message.

JULIE
Hi, it's me. I feel terrible. Come back. Where are you? Call me.

She hangs up. Sits there.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Julie is having a drink with Sarah.

SARAH
I can't believe it. You're like, the ones. If you and Eric cant make it work, who can?

JULIE
Oh, all sorts of people can. Just not me. Because I'm a bitch. I am, Sarah. I'm a bitch.

SARAH
I know, I know you are. By the way, Garth and I broke up.

CONTINUED:

JULIE
Oh God. I didn't even ask. I'm a one-way street just like Eric says.

SARAH
It's okay. I wasn't in love with him.

JULIE
Do you really think I'm a bitch?

SARAH
(duh)
Well yeah.

JULIE
I know.

SARAH
But who isn't?

JULIE
Julia.

Sarah signals for another round of drinks.

JULIE (V.O.)
I've been thinking about me and Julia. She was a secretary for a government agency and I am too. A really nice guy married her, a really nice guy married me....

EXT. QUEENS - NIGHT

As the elevated subway comes over the 59th Street Bridge tofrom to Queens.

JULIE (V.O.)
Both of us were lost, and both of us were saved by food in some way or other. So major overlaps. But let's face it, I am not Julia Child. Julia Child probably never lost her temper just because something boiled over, or didn't work, or collapsed in the oven or just plain fell through.
(continued)

INT. JULIE POWELL'S APARTMENT - 2003 - NIGHT

Julie comes into the apartment. It's dark and empty.

EXT. POWELL APARTMENT - NIGHT

Crane up and we see Julie at her computer, in the otherwise dark apartment.

JULIE (V.O.)
And she was never horrible to her husband, I'm sure. And she never behaved like, who has time to be married? Which is how I behave sometimes I'm sorry to say. I wish I were more like her. I really do. She deserved her husband, and I don't. That's the truth. Well anyway. That's the truth for now. Yogurt for dinner.

She hits Send.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julie gets up from the computer and picks up the phone, walks over to the bed.

She dials a number.

INT. ARCHEOLOGY MAGAZINE - 2003 - NIGHT

Eric's phone rings. The machine picks up.

JULIE (ON MACHINE)
Hi. Where are you? I miss you.

A beat.

She hangs up.

Pull back to reveal Eric, on the couch in his office.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Julie, carrying the phone, flops down on the bed. She check to see if it's working. It's working.

INT. ARCHAEOLOGY MAGAZINE - 2003 - NIGHT

Eric, at his desk, reads Julie's blog.

INT. POWELL APARTMENT - 2003 - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Julie lies on the bed in the mostly-dark apartment. The phone rings.

JULIE
Hello?

JULIE'S MOTHER (THROUGH FILTER)
Julie, is something wrong?

JULIE
No. Why would you think that?

JULIE'S MOTHER (THROUGH FILTER)
Are you and Eric having some kind of problem?

JULIE
Of course not.

JULIE'S MOTHER (THROUGH FILTER)
Is he there and you can't talk?

JULIE
He's not here.

JULIE'S MOTHER (THROUGH FILTER)
I just read your blog and it was strange and uncharacteristically thoughtful. Where is he?

JULIE
Out. He went out for pizza.

JULIE'S MOTHER (THROUGH FILTER)
Have you stopped cooking?

JULIE
Just temporarily. Just take a little break from cooking.

JULIE'S MOTHER (THROUGH FILTER)
Well get back to it. It would be good for you to finish something for once in your life. Julia didn't give up.

CONTINUED:

JULIE
Who says I'm giving up?

JO ANN POWELL
I'm just saying, don't.

Julie's mother hangs up.

On Julie.

She sits up.

She lies down.

She sits up.

EXT. POWELL APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julie walks out onto the street.

INT. ASTORIA MARKET - NIGHT

Julie shops for food.

EXT. POWELL APARTMENT - 2003 - NIGHT

Julie walks home, carrying her groceries.

She sees something.

Eric is walking from the subway towards her.

He sees her.

On Julie, smiling. A huge smile.

JULIE
Are you back? Please be back.

ERIC
What's for dinner?

EXT. POWELL APARTMENT - NIGHT

The lights go on in the apartment. They're home.

INT. BOSTON TRAIN STATION - 1957 - DAY

Julia and Simca walk into the station waiting room. They look around.

JULIA
Avis said she'd meet us even if we were late.

SIMCA
Well, if she's not here, we can take a taxi. They probably have taxis in Boston.

JULIA
She'll be here. In a plaid jacket. That's how I'm to recognize her.

Simca looks at her.

SIMCA
What do you mean, recognize her? Has she changed?

Julia takes Avis' letter from her purse.

JULIA
(quoting from the letter)
"Look for a middle-aged woman in a plaid jacket."

SIMCA
You and Avis have never met?

JULIA
No. We're just pen pals.

Simca is flabbergasted.

SIMCA
You don't know each other?

JULIA
We do. We write.

They sit down in the station.

SIMCA
But how did you start writing one another?

CONTINUED:

JULIA
Long story.
(beat)
Avis' husband Bernard DeVoto, now dead, was a wonderful writer, and he wrote an article in Harper's Magazine about stainless steel knives and how much he absolutely detested them.

SIMCA
Yes?

JULIA
So I wrote him a fan letter, because he was one hundred per cent right, and Avis wrote me back. Then I wrote her back, and she wrote me back, that was eight years ago I guess.

A woman in a camel coat comes into the station. This is AVIS DE VOTO.

AVIS
Julia!

JULIA
Avis!

They embrace.

INT. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN OFFICES - 1957 - DAY

Julia, Simca and Avis are in a conference room with several HOUGHTON MIFFLIN EXECUTIVES and editor DOROTHY DE SANTILLANA.

On a table is their manuscript, 700 pages long.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN EXECUTIVE #1
This is a very impressive manuscript, Mrs. Child --

JULIA
Thank you.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN EXECUTIVE #1
And your editor loves it.

DOROTHY DE SANTILLANA
I do. I think it's brilliant.

CONTINUED:

AVIS
There's really nothing like it on the market.

On Julia and Simca, hopeful.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN EXECUTIVE #1
But the problem is not just the length --

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN EXECUTIVE #2
Seven hundred pages --

JULIA
I know it's long --

SIMCA
We know --

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN EXECUTIVE #3
Seven hundred pages of just sauce and poultry recipes --

JULIA
But we thought perhaps you could publish it in several volumes. The first one, sauces, the second --

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN EXECUTIVE #3
Poultry.

JULIA
Yes. And, then fish, meat, vegetables, desserts. Six volumes.

A beat. Is she serious?

SIMCA
Eggs.

JULIA
Seven.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN EXECUTIVE #1
We don't want to publish an encyclopedia --

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN EXECUTIVE #2
I thought this was intended for housewives --

CONTINUED: (2)

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN EXECUTIVE #3
Housewives want something quick, with a mix. Like this --

Houston-Mifflin Executive #3 hands Julia and Simca 4 book called something like Real Home Cooking by Della Simmons.

DOROTHY DE SANTILLANA
But if you're willing to revise it, I'm sure everyone would be interested --

On the men. No comment.

INT. AVIS DE VOTO'S KITCHEN - DUSK

Avis is making martinis for Julia and Simca. sitting, shell-shocked, at the kitchen table. Simca reads from Della Simmons' cookbook.

JULIA
Oh Simca, I am so sorry. You picked the wrong collaborator --

SIMCA
(waving the cookbook)
Yes. I should have worked with this woman. "Baked Alaska in a Flowerpot."

AVIS
We'll just take the book away from Houghton Mifflin and find another publisher. We have just begun to fight.

SIMCA
(from the cookbook)
What is marshmallow fluff?

AVIS
And keep the advance, by the way. Keep the whole $250. Don't give them back a penny of it.

JULIA
Why did we ever decide to do this anyway? What were we thinking?

SIMCA
Who can remember?

CONTINUED:

JULIA
I can. We wanted to write a French cookbook for women who didn't have cooks --
(beat)
that's what we promised them. Well. We'll just do it over and that's that. It will be easy. It will. The dessert section is done and thanks to Simca, it's brilliant. I just haven't typed them up. And it will give me something to do in Oslo.

FAST CUTS BETWEEN JULIE AND JULIA:

BOTH OF THEM COOKING, BOTH OF THEM HAVING THE BEST TIME. JULIA SHARPENS A KNIFE ... JULIE SHARPENS A KNIFE ... JULIA MAKES A WATERCRESS SOUP IN A FOOD MILL ... JULIE MAKES A WATERCRESS SOUP IN THE CUISINART ... JULIA TYPES THE WORDS "FLOATING ISLAND" ... JULIE TYPES THE WORDS "SO LAST NIGHT I MADE FLOATING ISLAND" ... JULIA EATS ONION SOUP AND THE CHEESE EXTENDS FROM THE SOUP TO HER LIPS ... JULIE EATS ONION SOUP AND THE CHEESE EXTENDS FROM THE SOUP TO HER LIPS ... JULIA SLATHERS A CHICKEN IN BUTTER ... JULIE REMOVES A PERFECT ROAST CHICKEN FROM THE OVEN ... JULIA TAKES A TUMS ... JULIE TAKES A TUMS ... PAUL TAKES A TUMS ... ERIC TAKES A TUMS .... JULIA ICES A CHOCOLATE CAKE ... JULIE AND ERIC EAT CHOCOLATE CAKE ...

INT. OSLO APARTMENT - 1959 - DAY

Julia puts her huge 800-page manuscript, "French Recipes for American Cooks," into envelopes and addresses them -- one is to Avis De Voto in Cambridge, one is to Houghton Mifflin in Boston. She looks at Paul.

JULIA
I have to savor this moment, the moment when anything is possible, the moment when you can imagine they are just going to love what you did and it's going to sell a million copies.

PAUL
So an excellent bottle of wine is called for. What's for dinner?

INT. JULIE POWELL'S LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Julie in a last minute frenzy. She's Windexing everything that needs Windexing, including Eric's glasses. she picks up Eric's sneakers and puts them into a closet. Sets the tab Lights the candles and isn't quite done when the doorbell rings.

JULIE
Aaaah!

ERIC
I'll finish, I'll finish.

She looks at him.

JULIE
Thank you. You are ...
(she's not going to say, "a saint")
A terrible human being ...

ERIC
Thank you.

JULIE
And very difficult to live with.

She goes to the door. Looks at Eric, crosses her fingers.

JULIE
(into intercom)
Who's there?

AMANDA HESSER
(over intercom)
Amanda Hesser of the New York Times.

JULIE
Yeow!
(over intercom)
Come in.

INT. JULIE POWELL'S LIVING ROOM - 2003 - NIGHT

Julie, Eric and Amanda Hesser eat dinner as the photographer takes pictures.

CONTINUED:

JULIE
You have such a sense of Julia when you do something like this, as a teacher, as a voice. I have conversations with her while I'm cooking, I feel like she's here, with me, in the kitchen. And of course, she's the person I write for every day, although I don't think she ever reads it, I don't know. I'm dying to meet her. I would like to be her bridesmaid. In her wedding. In 1946. I realize it would take a sort of inexplicable episode in time travel, but that's the sort of thing I think about.

ERIC
Were planning a pilgrimage to Julia's Cambridge kitchen in the

Smithsonian Museum when this is over.

JULIE
But first I have to finish. I have days and 24 recipes to go. And I still have to bone a duck.

Another flash goes off. They go on eating.

JULIE
I read somewhere that it's bad form to say "Yum" while you're eating, but yum.

INT. SUBWAY - DAY

Julie rides the subway to work. The passenger in the next seat is reading about her in the New York Times. We see the headline:

A RACE TO MASTER THE ART OF FRENCH COOKING.

INT. LE PAIN QUOTIDIEN - DAY

A man standing on line is reading about Julie in the New York Times.

Julie is on line behind him. Ernestine joins her. They high-five.

INT. JULIE POWELL'S CUBICLE - LMDC - 2003 - DAY

Julie sits in her cubicle. The phones are ringing. She answers, puts the caller on hold, answers another.

JULIE
Julie Powell....

SARAH (ON PHONE)
Julie, it's Sarah. The New York Times. I don't believe it.

JULIE
I know, I know I know I I know.

INT. POWELL LIVING ROOM - 2003 - NIGHT

Julie comes up the stairs and into the living room.

Eric is waiting.

ERIC
Messages. On machine. Sixty-five.

Julie turns on the machine.

ON THE MACHINE:

"If this is the Julie Powell in this morning's New York Times, this is Judy Clain, I'm an editor at Little Brown and I wanted to talk to you about whether you were interested in writing a book. You can call me at 212-249-0049" ... "This is Sarah Chalfont, I'm literary agent, I don't know if you have an agent but I would love to talk to you about representing you" ...

On Julie, thrilled.

JULIE
Eric, I'm going to be a writer --

ERIC
-- you are a writer --

She jumps into Eric's lap and starts to kiss him.

They kiss. After a moment:

JULIE
I have to make a pear tart.

They kiss again.

CONTINUED:

ERIC
Later.

They kiss again. It turns into something. The machine continues to play messages:

"I'm a producer at the CBS Evening News" ... "I'm an editor at Food and Wine Magazine" ... "I'd love to represent you," .-- "Hey, it's Mom, you're in the New York Times, oh my God, everyone is calling. Guess who called? Remember your Aunt Jessie's cousin Dorie in Abilene, the one with the husband who won the pie-eating contest?" "I'm a producer at the Food Network and we'd love to meet with you..." "Talk to you ..." "We have some ideas ..." "I don't know whether you're thinking of turning this into ..." "A book..." "A movie..." "A television series...." "A one-woman show ..." "Call me..." "Call me ..." "Call me ...."

INT. SAME SCENE - LATER

Julie and Eric lie in bed, afterwards.

The phone starts to ring.

Neither of them moves.

The machine picks up.

ANSWERING MACHINE
It's Julie and Eric, leave a message.

VOICE ON ANSWERING MACHINE
It's Barry Ryan from the Santa Barbara News-Press, and I'm writing an article about Julia Child's 90th birthday and I asked her about you.
(continued)

Julie jumps out of bed and runs to answer the phone.

VOICE ON ANSWERING MACHINE
I didn't know if she even knew about your blog, but she did, and frankly she was kind of a pill about it --

JULIE
Hello.... Yes, yes it is.... She said that? Julia Child said that? .... Has she ... has she read my blog? ....
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

JULIE (cont'd)
No, no, I don't really want to comment, but thank you for calling.

She hangs up. She looks at Eric, who's gotten out of bed and wandered over.

JULIE
Julia hates me.

INT. OSLO APARTMENT - 1959 - DUSK

As Paul Child comes into the apartment. Julia is sitting on the couch.

PAUL
Julia?

Julia hands him a letter.

JULIA
They hate us. Houghton Mifflin.

He starts to read the letter.

PAUL
They don't hate you.

JULIA
Yes they do. They absolutely do.

PAUL
They say the book is good ...

JULIA
But they don't want to publish it.

PAUL
They say it's too expensive ...
They say it's economically prohibitive ...

JULIA
Eight years of my life. It just turned out to be something to do, so I wouldn't have nothing to do. Oh well. Now what?

PAUL
You're a teacher. You can teach. We'll go home --

CONTINUED:

JULIA
Where's home? Where do we live?

PAUL
Home is wherever we are. Well figure it out. You can teach in our kitchen. You can teach on television.

JULIA
On television? Me?

PAUL
Yes, I think you would be excellent on television.

JULIA
Me????

She laughs.

PAUL
I'm not kidding you, I'm not.
(beat)
Someone is going to publish your book. Someone is going to read your book and realize what you've done. Your book is amazing. Your book is a work of genius. Your book is going to change the world. Do you hear me?

JULIA
Oh, you are so sweet. You are the sweetest man.

PAUL
Fuck them.

INT. JUDITH JONES' OFFICE AT ALFRED KNOPF - 1959 - DAY

JUDITH JONES, a young editor, is at her desk when BILL KOSHLAND, a senior editor, sticks his head into her office.

BILL KOSHLAND
Judith, would you take a look at this? Our intrepid literary scout Avis de Voto is friends with some woman who's written a huge French cookbook. Houghton Mifflin just turned it down --

CONTINUED:

Judith Jones looks at the manuscript.

JUDITH JONES
"French Recipes for American Cooks." Terrible title.

FAST CUTS:

JUDITH JONES DRIES CHUNKS BEEF WITH PAPER TOWELS... ADDS RED WINE FOR THE GUST OF STEAM ...SPATTERS OF OIL AND WINE FALL ONTO THE ONIONSKIN PAGES.... JUDITH JONES TASTES THE BOEUF BOURGUIGNON ....

JUDITH JONES
Yum.

EXT. JULIA CHILD'S HOUSE IN CAMBRIDGE MASSACHUSETTS - 1960 - DAY

A U.S. Mail truck pulls up in front.

INT. JULIA CHILD'S CAMBRIDGE KITCHEN - 1960 - DAY

Julia and Paul have just moved in. Furniture is still in disarray, and there are packing boxes.

In the kitchen, Julia is unpacking. Copper pots, whisks, her mortar and pestle, etc.

Paul is installing a large pegboard wall next to a huge stove.

The doorbell rings.

EXT. JULIA CHILD'S HOUSE IN CAMBRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Julia answers the door. A MAILMAN is standing there.

MAILMAN
Special delivery for Mrs. Julia Child.

Julia takes the letter, signs for it.

Looks at the return address: Alfred Knopf Publishers.

She sits down in on a bench on the front porch, amidst packing boxes and disordered outdoor furniture. She braces herself.

CONTINUED:

Then she opens the letter.

JUDITH JONES (V.O.)
Dear Mrs. Child: We have read your superb French cookbook, studying it, cooking from it, estimating, and so on, and we have come to the conclusion that it is a unique book that we would be very proud to publish ...

JULIA
Paul! Paul!

Paul appears from house.

PAUL
What? What what what?

JULIA
Knopf wants to publish the book. Is it Knopf --
(she pronounces the K)
Or Knopf?
(she makes the K silent)

PAUL
Who cares?

JULIA
They're offering us an advance of $1500!
(goes back to reading the letter)
"We believe your book will do for French cooking here in America what Irma Rombauer's The Joy of Cooking did for standard cooking, and we will sell it that way" --

She throws her arms around Paul kisses him.

JULIA
Simca! I have to call Simca!

She goes into the house.

INT. JUDITH JONES' OFFICE AT KNOPF - DAY

Julia sits in Judith Jones' office and she and Judith Jones go over titles together.

CONTINUED:

JUDITH JONES (V.O.)
When we meet, which I hope will be soon, I especially want to talk to you about the title of the book, because it's of the utmost importance that the title distinguish this book from all the other French cookbooks on the market.

On Judith Jones' desk are several titles, as well as some words: "French." "Cooking," "Mastery," "Cookbook," "The," "Master." Judith Jones moves them around into various configurations: "The Master French Cookbook," "The Mastery of French Cooking," "The French Cooking Master," "How To Master French Cooking."

Judith Jones moves a few more words around, writes another word or two, and puts "How to Master the Art of French Cooking."

She writes "ing" on a piece of paper. She removes the "How to" and adds the "ing" to Master. Now it says: "Mastering the Art of French Cooking."

JULIA
Is this the way you normally do this?

JUDITH
Absolutely not.

JUDITH JONES
"Mastering the Art of French Cooking." What do you think?

Judith Jones and Julia stare at it.

JULIA
At this point, I have no idea whatsoever.

JUDITH JONES
Julia, that won't do.

JULIA
All right then. I love it.

ERIC (V.O.)
She said "hate"?

INT. JULIE POWELL'S APARTMENT - 2003 - MINUTES LATER

Julie is face down on the bed, Eric next to her.

ERIC
Julia Child used the word "hate"?

JULIE
No. But she said I wasn't respectful. Or serious. Or something. I am so respectful.

JUMP CUT TO:

JULIE
How much more serious could a person be?

JUMP CUT TO:

JULIE
Do you think she thinks I'm sort of using her?

ERIC
She can't have read your blog. Did she read it?

JULIE
He didn't know if she'd read it. But she definitely had an opinion about it.

JUMP CUT TO:

JULIE
Do you think it's because I use the F word every so often?

ERIC
(shrugs)
Could be. Who knows?

JUMP CUT TO:

ERIC
Look, something's wrong with her if she doesn't get what you're doing --

JULIE
But there's nothing wrong with her. Nothing. I've spent a year with her. She's perfect.

CONTINUED:

ERIC
The Julia Child in your head is perfect. The Julia Child who doesn't understand what you're: doing isn't perfect. The one in your head is the one that matters.

JULIE
I'm never going to know why she hates me. I'm never going to meet her.

ERIC
But you already know her.

Julie's eyes well with tears.

JULIE
Thank you.

ERIC
You're welcome. Any time.

JULIE
She saved me.

ERIC
You saved yourself.

Julie looks at Eric. He is so sweet.

JULIE
I was drowning and she pulled me out of the ocean.

ERIC
Don't get carried away.

INT. JULIE POWELL'S APARTMENT - DAY

A truck rumbles past. Julie is in the den on her computer.

JULIE (V.O.)
I've been thinking about Julia Child. Well of course, I mean, I've been thinking about her for a year now, but especially so today, because it's The End of the Project.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

JULIE (V.O.) (cont'd)
Julia Child began learning to cook because she loved her husband, and she loved food, and she didn't know what else to do with herself. And in the process, she found joy. I didn't understand this for a long time, but I do now. But here's what Julia really taught me -- she taught me to cook.
(continued)

INT. JULIE POWELL'S KITCHEN - DAY

JULIE (V.O.)
So here we are. One day to go and one recipe. Today Julia and I are going to bone a duck. Specifically we are going to make Pate de Canard En Croute.

Mastering the Art of French Cooking is open to page 571: Pate de Canard En Croute. Julie is about to bone a duck. A DVD of Julia boning a duck is on a small TV in the kitchen.

JULIA (ON TELEVISION)
You may think that boning a duck is an impossible feat if you have never seen it done or thought of attempting it.

JULIE
Nothing is impossible.

JULIA (ON TELEVISION)
The procedure may take as long as minutes the first time because of fright. But don't be afraid --

JULIE
No fear, Julia. No fear.

It's as if they're speaking to each other. Julia is looking into the camera, straight at Julie.

JULIA (ON TELEVISION)
Take your knife and confront the duck, keeping the cutting edge of your knife facing the bone --

JULIE
Ready, aim --

CONTINUED:

Julie aims her knife facing the bone.

JULIA (ON TELEVISION)
To begin, cut a deep slit down the back of the bird from the neck to the tail --

JULIE
-- fire.

She makes the first incision.... Slowly she Scrapes the meat away from the bone ... separates the bone at the joint

JULIA (ON TELEVISION)
You must be careful here as the skin is thin and easily slit --

Dissolve to later in the process, as we watch Julie do exactly what Julia does ... she folds the duck over the stuffing ... she sews it up with a trussing needle ... she wraps it in pastry ... all the time talking to Julia. We cut back and forth between Julia and Julie boning the duck .... it's as if they're one person.

INT. JULIE POWELL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Julie opens the oven door. Eric is with her. She takes the duck en croute out of the oven.

It's beautiful.

JULIE
Look at this --

She shows Eric the drawing of the duck in Mastering the Art of French Cooking.

JULIE
It looks exactly the way it's supposed to look.

INT. JULIE POWELL'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

As Julie brings the duck to the dining table. Tim and Annette are there, with Sarah and Jake and Annabelle and LESTER the billionaire, who's fussing over the wine.

Everyone bursts into applause.

CONTINUED:

JULIE
Three hundred sixty five days, 524 recipes.

All her friends at the table lift their glasses to toast Julie.

Julie lifts her glass to Eric.

JULIE
Eric, I could never have done this without you.
(quoting Paul Child)
As someone once said, "You are the butter to my bread, the breath to my life." To my husband.

"Awwwwww."

INT. COMPUTER - DAY

Julie is at her computer. We hear the last words of the August 14, 2003 blog:

JULIE (V.O.)
So it's over. The Project has come to a close. Were back exactly where we started -- Eric, me, the cat, slightly worse for wear, sitting in the outer boroughs, eating. So thanks, everybody. And guess what? Bon Appetit.

EXT. POWELL APARTMENT - NIGHT

Pan up to the night sky as we hear the readers:

INT. SMITHSONIAN MUSEUM - 2004 - DAY

Julie and Eric stand in line to see Julia Child's Cambridge kitchen. There's a big cardboard cutout of Julia and a sign reading "Bon Appetit." In the kitchen we see the huge stove. The pegboard. The pots and pans hanging everywhere. The mortar and pestle.

There's a large black-and-white picture of Julia Child in a chef's apron.

Julie opens her purse and removes a pound of butter.

CONTINUED:

She solemnly places it on the shelf under Julia's picture.

JULIE
(to Julia)
I love you, Julia.

Julie looks around the kitchen.

Then she walks away.

HOLD ON THE KITCHEN IN THE SMITHSONIAN

MAGICALLY, JULIA CHILD ENTERS THE KITCHEN.

IT'S 1961.

WE'RE IN CAMBRIDGE.

Julia takes the lid off the casserole on the stove.

Paul comes into the kitchen with the mail.

PAUL
What's for dinner?

JULIA
Navarin d'agneau.

Paul hands a manila envelope to Julia. It's from Alfred Knopf Publishers.

Julia rips it open.

Inside, just off the press, is the first hardcover copy of Mastering the Art of French Cooking by Simone Beck, Louisette Bertholle and Julia Child.

Julia lets out a whoop.

FREEZE FRAME.

FADE OUT.

CRAWL:

Paul Child died in 1994 at the age of 92.

Julia Child died in 2004 at the age of 91.

Mastering the Art of French Cooking is now in its 49th printing.

CONTINUED: (2)

Julie Powell's book "Julie & Julia" was published in 2005. She and Eric still live in Queens, although they no longer live over a pizzeria. She is a writer.

Her book has been made into a movie.